DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 457 393 CE 082 437

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TITLE	Creating Workforce Development Systems That Work: An Evaluation of the Initial One-Stop Implementation Experience. Final Report Appendices: State and Local Profiles.
INSTITUTION	Social Policy Research Associates, Menlo Park, CA.
SPONS AGENCY	Employment and Training Administration (DOL), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1997-08-15
NOTE	667p.; For Final Report and Practitioner's Guide, see CE 082 436 and CE 082 438. Fifth author's name varies on cover page.
CONTRACT	F-4957-5-00-80-30
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://usworkforce.org/onestop/pdf/eval/part1app.pdf and http://usworkforce.org/onestop/pdf/eval/part2app.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF03/PC27 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Agency Cooperation; Case Studies; Cooperative Programs; Coordination; *Economically Disadvantaged; Employment Programs; *Employment Services; Institutional Cooperation; *Job Training; Labor Force Development; Program Evaluation; *Program Implementation; Staff Development; *State Programs; Welfare Recipients; Welfare Services
IDENTIFIERS	*One Stop Centers

ABSTRACT

This appendix includes individual case study profiles of the One-Stop Career Center implementation experiences of the 9 states and 14 local sites included in the study of initial implementation experiences. The 12 state and local profiles are State of Connecticut (CT); CT Works Career Center, New London, CT; CT Works Career Center, Willimantic, CT; State of Indiana (IN); Eastside Center, Indianapolis Network for Employment and Training, Indianapolis, IN; Workforce Development Center, Lawrenceburg, IN; State of Iowa (IA); Workforce Development Center, Creston, IA; Workforce Development Center, Des Moines, IA; State of Maryland (MD); Eastside Career Center, Baltimore, MD; and Columbia Employment and Training Center, Columbia, MD. State profiles typically include state context; evolution of the One-Stop Career Center design; organization and governance; communication and coordination; funding arrangements, budgeting, and fiscal issues; and implementation of state support mechanisms. Local site profiles cover local context; organization and governance; communication and coordination; funding arrangements, budgeting, and fiscal issues; design of the local One-Stop Career Center initiative; implementation of local support mechanisms; delivery of One-Stop Career Center services to customers; customer response; and assessment and lessons learned. (YLB)

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SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Creating Workforce Development Systems That Work:

An Evaluation of the Initial One-Stop Implementation Experience

Appendices: State and Local Profiles

Final Report
August 15, 1997

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DOL Contract No. F-4957-5-00-80-30
Task Orders #1, #3

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APPENDIX A

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During June 1996

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 4/28/97

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

Several economic shocks occurred in Connecticut during the period of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Widespread downsizing within the defense and insurance industries led to high levels of unemployment in the state. During the three years between 1989 and 1992, over 150,000 jobs were lost and unemployment doubled from 3.7% to 7.5%. In 1992, it was estimated that more than 75% of workers who had lost jobs were permanently laid off—the highest permanent job loss rate on record—and the proportion of unemployed who had not worked during the previous six months had reached the second highest level since the 1940s. Unemployment has, however, declined since 1992 to current levels of about 5%.

Partly in response to these rapid structural changes in the state's economy, a far-reaching examination of the state's workforce development system was undertaken. Surveys conducted among business and individual customers of the Connecticut Department of Labor at about this time revealed low levels of customer satisfaction with the system. Employers expressed their desire for more customized services that would meet their changing needs in a timely manner. Individual customers complained of "red tape," the fact that they often had to give the same information several times, and contact several DOL employees in order to access the services they required. At the policy level, weaknesses identified by other stakeholders included the existence of multiple and ineffective planning processes, a poor capacity for priority setting, and a lack of overall accountability for workforce development services.

In response to these criticisms, a number of initiatives were undertaken in Connecticut to integrate the planning and delivery of workforce development services (described below under Evolution of the State One-Stop Vision). Thus, prior to the receipt of the federal One-Stop Implementation Grant, much of the groundwork for increased coordination, co-location, and integration of DOL-funded workforce development services had already taken place, particularly for the programs operated by the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL).

With the advent of the Connecticut's One-Stop initiative in 1995, nineteen existing Job Centers administered by CTDOL are being transformed into One-Stop Centers. These One-Stop Centers, which are known as *Connecticut Works* Centers, are intended to offer a full range of USDOL services through co-location and integration of services administered by the Connecticut Department of Labor (responsible for ES and UI), Regional Workforce Development Boards (responsible for JTPA and adult education) as well as services provided by other state and local partner agencies. By mid-1996, 7 of a total of 19 Job Centers had been certified as *Connecticut Works* Centers, and a remaining 12 were slated to be certified before the end of 1997, the third year of One-Stop implementation.

Several contextual variables have influenced One-Stop planning, design, and implementation in Connecticut. These include: (1) a history of providing One-Stop type services through "transition centers" for dislocated workers; (2) a strong commitment to the development of tools for performance measurement; and (3) an equally strong emphasis on developing staff capacity through training. These are briefly described below.

- *In 1994, the Connecticut Department of Labor and Regional Workforce Development Boards cooperated in establishing "transition centers" for dislocated workers at Job Centers throughout the state.* These centers created an early opportunity for a collaboration among local and state agencies in providing services to assist dislocated workers. The experiences gained with transition centers helped develop the interagency partnerships necessary to provide integrated career services to a universal population.
- *There has been a commitment to the development of outcome-based performance indicators for One-Stops.* Indicators that allow for a balanced picture of One-Stop Center performance have been developed by the state with substantial input from local management and staff. An emphasis has been placed on developing local understanding of the relevance of outcome measures in promoting continuous improvement of services.
- *Staff development has been a major priority of the One-Stop initiative in Connecticut.* Staff development and training occupy a central place in the state's One-Stop initiative. Capacity building is viewed as a strategic business tool for promoting behavioral change, organizational results, and continuous improvement.

EVOLUTION OF THE STATE ONE-STOP VISION

The state design for a One-Stop system in Connecticut has emerged gradually over the last decade. A major step toward the integration of the state's workforce development efforts was taken in 1989, when the Connecticut legislature established the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC), whose mandate was to plan for the coordination of existing employment and training programs. In its first "Human Resource Development Plan," produced in 1990, the Commission identified over 60 workforce development programs administered by 15 state agencies.

By 1991, CETC had developed a strategy for coordinating the fragmented array of employment and training and placement programs in the state. The Commission recommended that this be accomplished through the formation of regional workforce development boards representing the interests of business, government, labor, education, and the community. In cooperation with the governor and state agencies, these boards were to determine priorities for a wide array of employment, training, and placement programs and coordinate the delivery of services to address those priorities. CETC promoted a vision of a workforce development system capable of building a "fully productive workforce, educated and trained to compete in the global marketplace."

In an early report, CETC identified five major human resource investment goals for the state's workforce system. These were

- To create and support an integrated, accountable, and universal workforce development system;
- To support a system of lifelong learning oriented to producing a resilient workforce with the qualities and skills needed to succeed during periods of economic, social, organizational, and structural change;
- To promote workforce skills and values that support the career aspirations and competencies suitable to a changing economic environment;
- To promote social and cultural attitudes and values that support the inter-dependence of work and family life necessary to achieve general well-being; and
- To promote a coordinated planning and policy structure to strengthen interagency, state and local, and public and private cohesiveness in planning and administering workforce development initiatives.

Based partly on this input, a major reorganization of the Connecticut Department of Labor was undertaken in 1991. Reorganization had as its five major goals: (1) improving the quality of services to customers; (2) reducing in the number of "hand-offs" of customers among staff; (3) decentralizing authority and decision-making; (4) providing for improved customer service support; and (5) developing CTDOL into a "model" agency and employer. As part of this reorganization, front-line staff in Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Employment Services (ES), which were already co-located, were cross-trained so that individual customers could receive both of these services at the same time. Services to employers were decentralized with the creation of Business Services Units within each of nine regions. These regional Business Service Units began to offer more localized services to employers such as customized job training, trade adjustment assistance, and apprenticeship programs. In addition, CTDOL's hierarchy was substantially flattened, and the structure of decision-making authority was decentralized.

In 1992, the Connecticut legislature approved a plan developed by CETC to establish nine Regional Workforce Development Boards. The Commission envisioned a regional system that would expand on the existing system of Private Industry Councils (PICs) operating under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). In 1993, the role of the Regional Boards was expanded to include the administration of "coordinated education and training opportunities" funds transferred from the State Department of Education. As described below, Regional Workforce Development Boards have emerged as policy and oversight bodies for the emerging system of *Connecticut Works* Centers, in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Labor.

In 1994, the Connecticut Department of Labor and Regional Workforce Development Boards cooperated in establishing Transition Centers for dislocated workers at Job Centers throughout the state. These pilot centers, modeled after earlier efforts by PICs in the 1980s, created an opportunity for collaboration among CTDOL, Regional Boards, and other local and state agencies, and were focused on providing services to individuals and businesses affected by downsizing and layoffs. Transition Centers provided individual customers access to professional support from trained staff, often in a group setting. Customers of Transition Centers also had free use of telephones and faxes for local and long-distance calls, copy machines, assistance in writing and printing cover letters and resumes, free mailing, and access to a reference library that included books, newspapers, and other written reference materials.

Although originally conceived as a response to assist dislocated workers, Transition Centers eventually served as an important bridge toward providing integrated career services to a universal population.

In the spring of 1994, the Connecticut legislature passed Public Act 94-116, which provides formal legislative authority for implementing a statewide system of Job Centers focused on the delivery of workforce development services to the general public.[1] The Act calls for the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission to set overall policy for the Job Center system. Administrative oversight of the Job Center system is to be shared between the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) and Regional Workforce Development Boards (RWDBs). The legislation also calls for these entities to consult with the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development to ensure coordination of services with employers and to collaborate with other public and private education, human services, and employment and training providers to deliver coordinated services to individuals.

As part of the One-Stop initiative, Connecticut's existing Job Centers are being transformed into One-Stop centers through the involvement of additional state and local agency partners and development of the capacity to provide integrated services to job seekers and business customers, with an emphasis on the use of self-access services. As described in its application for a federal One-Stop Implementation Grant, Connecticut's initial schedule for the "roll out" of *Connecticut Works* Centers was very ambitious. The state's goal was to open fourteen out of nineteen planned One-Stop centers during the first year of implementation in 1995. In actuality, only two centers were opened during this formative year. At the time of the site visit in June 1996, seven *Connecticut Works* Centers had opened; the remaining twelve centers were scheduled to be certified as One-Stop centers in 1997.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

The Connecticut Employment and Training Commission was intended to be the state's major policy body for issues of workforce development. In addition to CETC's mandate to produce a coordinated workforce development plan, it was designed to provide a forum for communication and regular exchange of information among state agency partners. Since the election of a new governor in 1994, however, the process of making new appointments to CETC has been slow. Although nominations for the new commission have been made, nominees have not yet been approved, and former CETC members have convened only twice since 1994.

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[1] The same legislation established the framework for a statewide school-to-work system.

An inter-agency "Statewide Planning Committee" for One-Stop has assumed the lead in implementing the state's workforce policy. This committee is co-chaired by CTDOL's Deputy Commissioner for Employment and Training and the Director of New Haven's Regional Workforce Development Board (RWDB) and includes representatives from four other state partner agencies — the Department of Social Services (which includes the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services), the State Department of Education, the Department of Higher Education, and the Department of Economic and Community Development. Although originally established as one of nine functional committees under the state's One-Stop initiative (see "Communication and Coordination" below), since mid-1994, the Statewide Planning Committee has become the executive committee for One-Stop implementation in Connecticut.

Under the federal and state One-Stop initiative, interagency coordination has begun to bear fruit, and a number of formal agreements have been reached with state agency partners, although the agencies responsible for the mandated DOL-funded programs—CTDOL and Regional Workforce Development Boards—remain the lead actors within Job Centers, renamed *Connecticut Works* Centers under the One-Stop initiative. The state has identified a total of four additional state agencies as core partners in One-Stop planning and administration. Thus, a total of five state agencies, in addition to the network of nine Regional Workforce Development Boards, are the major actors in state One-Stop planning and implementation.

- *The Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL)* is responsible for the delivery of UI and ES services through *Connecticut Works* Centers and business services through nine Business Services Units throughout the state.
- *The Regional Workforce Development Boards (RWDBs)* are responsible for overseeing the delivery of services using JTPA and adult education funds in nine service delivery areas.
- *The Department of Social Services (DSS)* including the *Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)* administers financial assistance and social services to low-income persons and families and vocational

rehabilitation services to individuals with physical and mental disabilities. Although good working relationships have been established between *Connecticut Works* Centers and DSS offices in some local areas, in other local areas DSS has developed its own delivery system for employment-related services to DSS clients.

- *The State Department of Education* is involved in plans for using One-Stop centers to provide job development services to youth involved in School-to-Work programs, educational needs assessments, and career decision-making workshops for youth. Under the One-Stop implementation grant, SDE has received funding to train One-Stop staff on adult basic education, the integration of school-to-career services into One-Stop centers, and the use of occupational information databases.
- *The Department of Higher Education* is involved in plans to provide educational counseling, as well as occupational, technical, and career education to One-Stop customers and customized or short-term courses to workers or employers; this agency also operates an education and employment information center hotline available to One-Stop customers.
- *The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)* participates in the development of business services and case management for CTDOL Business Services, operates the Connecticut Economic Information System, and helps to market One-Stop services to employers. DECD plans to outstation three or four staff members in each of the nine CTDOL Business Services Units around the state to ensure seamless services to businesses.

The state has also developed One-Stop partnerships with the State Library system, which has resulted in the establishment of "mini-career centers" in libraries, linked libraries to the *Connecticut Works* home page and electronic network, and enabled One-Stop centers to draw on the information and support services available to state residents through the library system. An emerging linkage with the state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has led to plans to establish DMV licensing, identification, and automobile registration services at One-Stop centers and install *Connecticut Works* job kiosks at DMV offices.

State Framework for Local Governance

The state provides for two levels of local governance—policy oversight and guidance at the level of "Workforce Development Regions" and day-to-day management at the level of the *Connecticut Works* Centers. Although the funds actually administered by the Regional Boards are still somewhat narrowly focused—including JTPA and basic education preparation for individuals interested in further education or training—the Boards have a broad policy mandate to assess human resource development needs in their respective regions, plan for regional employment and training programs, oversee workforce programs and services, and coordinate a broad range of employment, education, training, and related services. Regional Workforce Development Boards are responsible for approving the annual service plans prepared by each *Connecticut Works* Center in their region.

Connecticut Works Centers are governed by local "Management Committees" co-chaired by the local director for the ES/UI programs (a CTDOL employee)[2] and the staff director of the Regional Workforce Development Board. When local Management Committees are initiated at the start-up of a Center, the ES/UI and RWDB directors jointly appoint the additional Management Committee members. Subsequent appointments are made by the Committee as a whole. Local Management Committee members may represent only public or non-profit entities that have training, education, or, employment as part of their mission. These entities must also be willing to contribute financial or non-financial resources to the Center.

Local Management Committees are responsible for developing an annual service plan that is approved by the RWDB Chair and the appropriate Chief Elected Official and forwarded to the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission for approval. Management Committees, in turn, are charged with selecting a Center Director responsible for day-to-day Center operations.[3] Currently, in all *Connecticut Works* Centers, the UI/ES director holds the position of *Connecticut Works* Director.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Communication and coordination among One-Stop agency partners at the state and local levels occur through the state's *Connecticut Works* Office, which is housed at CTDOL's headquarters in Wethersfield. The three full-time staff persons of the *Connecticut Works* office act as "brokering agents" for the One-Stop system as a whole, helping to coordinate and define partner relationship building with other state agencies, as well as within the various units and departments within CTDOL. *Connecticut Works* staff also foster productive communication among the various state and local partners and "shepherd" planned One-Stops through the process leading to certification by expediting project work plans. The *Connecticut Works* Office coordinates inter-agency meetings and schedules bi-weekly "resource team" meetings within CTDOL. At these meetings, information technology, business management, and operations staff discuss issues related to One-Stop implementation including facilities planning, marketing, budgeting, staff development, and performance measurement for planned and operational *Connecticut Works* Center.

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[2] CTDOL "Basic Services Staff" (UI/ES), had already been co-located in local Job Centers for many years, usually with two CTDOL managers working side by side. The state, faced with diminishing Wagner-Peyser funding has reduced the number of management staff at Centers by creating a single integrated ES/UI management position—Job Center Director. UI/ES functions were integrated and line staff was cross-trained.

[3] Center Directors must be from the public or private non-profit sectors.

The *Connecticut Works* Office arranges and staffs quarterly local Management Team meetings of Job Center and Workforce Development Board directors. These meetings provide the major avenue for face-to-face communication among state and regional staff. These meetings are attended by eighteen Job Center directors[4] and nine Regional Workforce Development Board directors, and provide an opportunity for peer networking. They allow directors to take stock of local developments, compare notes on problems and achievements related to One-Stop implementation, and alert the One-Stop office of any potential problems related to One-Stop roll-out.

The *Connecticut Works* Office also coordinates the activities of nine functional committees established during the period of One-Stop planning and early implementation. The Statewide Planning Committee has already been described. Other committees and their respective roles are described below.

- *The Performance Measures Committee* has guided the development of a comprehensive system for measuring performance of the *Connecticut Works* system and its component programs, including preparation of customer satisfaction surveys and quarterly "report cards" on statewide and local Center performance.
- *The Marketing Committee* oversees the development and execution of plans for marketing the *Connecticut Works* system statewide and provides local areas with marketing support.

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[4] There are 19 Job Centers of which 7 have been certified as *Connecticut Works* One-Stops. One of the Job Center directors manages two Job Centers.

- *The Labor Market Information Committee* facilitates the design, development, and implementation of LMI services to support the mission of the *Connecticut Works* system.
- *The Capacity Building Committee* oversees the development and implementation of activities to meet the on-going capacity building needs of *Connecticut Works* Centers.
- *The Facilities Committee* oversees standards for facility design and plans the development and implementation of the facilities housing the *Connecticut Works* Centers.
- *The Employer Services Committee* develops the plan for business services and ensures integration of business plans with other key players such as the Department of Community and Economic Development.
- *The Local Planning Committee* establishes procedures and guidelines for local planning and develops templates for funding and certification of *Connecticut Works* Centers.

DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Description of the State One-Stop Design

Through its Local Planning Committee, Connecticut has established guidelines for the development of local One-Stop centers, referred to as *Connecticut Works* Centers. Before individual Job Centers can be certified as *Connecticut Works* Centers, they must meet state requirements for the delivery of core services to individuals and employers.

Core Services for Individuals. The state has defined five "core services" that must be available to individuals at One-Stop centers. These are described below.

- *Job Services* including: (1) initial intake and review of work and educational history; (2) provision of information on careers and the labor market, job availability, and the quality of education and training programs; (3) preliminary skills, interest, and aptitude assessment; (4) career exploration; (5) job search assistance including self-directed resume preparation; (6) referrals to jobs, training, community services, and placement services; and (7) profiling, counseling, and workshops for UI recipients likely to have difficulty finding new jobs.
- *Veterans Employment Services Programs.*
- *Unemployment Insurance* services including initial claims filing; adjudication and appeals, and continuing claims, which are scheduled to be handled through voice response.

- *Career Services*, formerly known as Transition Center Services, including access to resource information, computers, telephones, printers, and copiers for job seekers.
- JTPA Services. Title II-A services include outreach, intake, assessment, eligibility determination, counseling, service plan preparation, referrals to training, pre-employment workshops; and job placement. Title III services include retraining and assistance with finding employment.
- *Trade Adjustment Assistance* including counseling, testing, and training.

Universal services, available to all customers at *Connecticut Works* Centers, must include the Job Bank, Talent Bank, labor market information, inventories of training and education opportunities, and other information related to job search available through Center resource libraries. Services available to all customers who complete the Employment Services "short-form" registration include additional job search support services, such as free access to telephones, fax, and word processors.

Centers must also provide orientations to all customers interested in registering for Job Services and Unemployment Insurance. At these orientations, customers are informed about all the services available through the Center, including services available to the general public and services reserved for persons enrolled in eligibility-based programs, such as JTPA. Among the services generally available to the general public are workshops offered by ES/UI and partner staff, including modules on pre-employment skills, vocational exploration, job search skills, and other specialized topics. Although case management services (including counseling, educational counseling, working with customers to develop service plans or "personal development plans," and referral to supportive services, placement, and relocation) are generally targeted to persons enrolled in eligibility-based programs, such services can be provided to individuals not enrolled in categorical programs on request.

Although they are not mandated to do so by the *Connecticut Works* certification process, local Centers are encouraged to co-locate and/or develop referral networks with a wide range of non-DOL partner agencies and service providers. Services that may be provided by these agencies through the One-Stop system are listed below.

- *Department of Social Service*. Support services that may be accessed on-site or through referrals include housing and financial assistance, medical care, substance abuse treatment, child care, food, clothing, emergency shelter, and transportation. The Bureau of Rehabilitation

Services can also assist persons with physical or mental disabilities to prepare for, find, or keep a job.

- *Department of Motor Vehicles*. The DMV currently has a desk in at least one One-Stop office where customers can obtain an identification card and renew driver's licenses and vehicle registration. Kiosks that will provide access to job listings and career services are also being planned for installation in a number of DMV offices.
- *State Library*. A unique partnership has been developed with the library system to provide training, materials, and computer infrastructure support to a number of reference libraries throughout the state. The goal is to use the library system as a point of contact for students, job seekers, and employers looking for up-to-date information on the labor market, career and training opportunities, and job availability.
- *Department of Higher Education* currently provides access to its toll-free information hotline on education and career opportunities as well as electronic access to listings of accredited study programs offered by colleges and occupational schools throughout the state. The department also funds Technical Assistance Centers at state universities and a Business Services Network at community technical colleges. State universities also provide specialized services to employers seeking assistance to upgrade the skills of their workforce, and community-technical colleges offer a variety of occupational, technical, and career education for immediate employment and job retraining, in addition to customized training for employers and job seekers.
- *Department of Education* currently provides a number of services to job seekers including those with substantial barriers to employment. Services include career decision-making workshops, bilingual vocational-technical programs, educational needs assessment, and career counseling. This department is also an important partner in the state's School-to-Career initiative.

Core Services for Employers. Reforming services to employers is a major priority of the present CTDOL Commissioner, who comes from a background in private business. Services are provided to business customers through Business Services staff in One-Stop centers. Business Services, provided by staff from both CTDOL and RWDB, are overseen by nine "Business Services Units"—one in each RWDB region. Business Service staff also cooperate with the Department of Economic and Community Development, which offers businesses assistance with project management, financing, site search and remediation, economic and demographic research, marketing, and business registration. Although a formal agreement with DECD has not yet been reached at the time of the site visit, it was expected that by the end of 1996, three to four DECD employees would be stationed in Business Services Units in each of four *Connecticut Works* Centers.

Basic services that must be available to employers at *Connecticut Works* Centers are described below:

- *Labor Exchange and Recruitment* services must include listing job openings; maintaining Job Bank listings; providing job matching, job development, recruiting, and applicant screening services for full-time or part-time jobs; and conducting follow-ups on applicants referred to or placed in jobs.
- *Workplace Consultation* services provided by Business Service Units are designed to assist employers seeking to attain or maintain competitiveness. Consultations can help businesses identify training and employment needs, cope with changes in the workforce, and understand issues related to quality, employee performance, and labor and UI laws and regulations.
- *Workforce Development Services* include tax credit programs for employers seeking to hire individuals from targeted populations; customized job training for employers in high technology and other growth industries; manufacturing and technology assistance for employers; and apprenticeship training programs;
- *Downsizing Support* must be available to employers and employees before and during company downsizings. These services can include assistance from the state dislocated worker unit and rapid response teams in providing on-site services to address the needs of employers experiencing major layoffs and their workers.

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

Connecticut Works offices are envisioned as places that will provide flexible and continuously available workforce development opportunities to all state residents regardless of age and prior work experience. According to the state's vision for One-Stops, customers should be able to enter the workforce development system "through any door" and "at any time" during a process of life-long learning. Equally important, *Connecticut Works* Centers are intended to shift the focus of workforce services from "job search" toward "career planning."

Funding for universal services remains a concern for local Centers. Most have dealt with increased customer flow through increased use of self-directed and group services. State respondents admit that there are challenges involved in paying for the types of services they envision for universal customers, and that the question of finding a correct mix of funding sources to pay for these services will continue to be an ongoing challenge.

The state currently requires customers to register for Employment Services in order to access job support services, career assistance, and workshops provided at One-Stop centers. Because this is done primarily for reasons of tracking, state and local respondents do not view this to be a major impediment to universal access, although alternatives that would still allow for customer tracking are also being considered.

Customer Choice

Connecticut seeks to further the goal of customer choice by empowering customers to choose services appropriate to their needs and by developing services that are appealing and user-friendly. Centers are encouraged to reduce the amount of "red tape" involved in accessing workforce services, to provide information for customers with special needs, and to adapt the hours of services at Centers to the needs of customers.

Connecticut Works Centers are expected to provide a full menu of service options to customers and to orient customers to the available services and different modes of accessing services. Whereas in the "traditional" workforce service delivery system there was usually a single entry point into the system, under the vision guiding the *Connecticut Works* system, customers will be able to enter the service delivery system at a number of different points, including automated voice-response systems and computer modem links. As an example, customers who now must come in person to a Job Center, will soon be able to enroll for unemployment benefits by telephone to a regional center. Continuing UI claims are already processed using telephone voice response.

In addition to services which will be available at the 19 planned *Connecticut Works* Centers, the state is also in the process of establishing a number of partnerships with state agencies that will allow for first contact with the Workforce Center system by customers at a variety of locations such as kiosks in Department of Motor Vehicles offices and "mini-Career Centers" within local libraries and schools.

Integrated Services

The immediate focus of many local integration efforts has revolved around defining coordinated and integrated roles for CTDOL and RWDB staff within One-Stop centers. The state envisions that integrated services will eventually include business, labor, economic development, education, employment and training, and human services. The achievement of integrated services is viewed as a continuous process of incorporating additional services and service providers into the *Connecticut Works* system. In several local sites, for example, One-Stop Centers already work closely with local DSS staff in providing welfare-to-work services. In addition, a renewed emphasis in some sites has been placed on incorporating career-to-work initiatives into the *Connecticut Works* local system. The recent decision to integrate and co-locate DECD business services units with CTDOL and DECD staff at four One-Stops represents a major step in the direction of providing integrated services to businesses.

In addition to providing convenient access to a wide range of employment and training services, the state also intends for One-Stops to act as a gateway to a variety of supplemental and support services. According to the state's vision, services and programs are to be made seamless from the customer's perspective. Customers should not feel that they are being "shuffled from one service to another."

State planners have created a matrix that defines minimum levels of integration for certification as a One-Stop Center. Existing and planned *Connecticut Works* Centers must not only submit information on the services to be provided at the Center but also must describe their approach to integrating services and programs. Although the state has not mandated a system of integrated intake for individual customers, several *Connecticut Works* Centers have developed common intake forms and systems.

Performance-Driven/Outcome Based

One of the goals of the state Performance Measurement Committee is that a standardized set of core measures should be utilized across all *Connecticut Works* offices in assessing One-Stop performance. These measures should have value to those working in the field, provide staff with basis for comparing outcomes with other offices in the state, and give staff performance feedback that will enable them to identify needed changes. The state views capacity building as a required element of a system that links performance management to continuous improvement. As a part of capacity building efforts, the state plans for staff in local offices to receive training in total quality management (TQM) and the analytical techniques that will allow them to design local performance measures to supplement those mandated by the state.

To promote these goals, CTDOL established a "Performance Measurement Unit" (PMU), which has been mandated to develop a core set of performance measures for *Connecticut Works* One-Stop Centers. Staff from this unit have worked with local area staff to ensure that local managers and staff understand the relevance of the materials and can use performance measures in a way that supports continuous improvement efforts. PMU staff, with input from state and local managers, developed a set of measures intended to gauge Center performance. Local staff participation in the process of choosing measures was seen as particularly important, since the state does not want Centers to feel that measures were "imposed" on them from the outside.

PMU staff developed a system of measures that is intended to provide a balanced picture of Center performance. Quarterly Reports, prepared for each Job Center and for the state as a whole, present this information in an easily understood way. The performance measures currently used include nine process measures, four context measures, and one workload measure. Outcome measures include:

- *Applicant/Claimant Satisfaction*, represented by an index of overall customer satisfaction;
- *Entered Employment*, measured as the percentage of registered job applicants who entered employment;
- *Job Bank Effectiveness*, measured as the percentage of purged job orders with at least one placement;
- *Employer Satisfaction*, represented by an index of overall employer satisfaction (this index was under development at the time of the evaluation visit);

Process measures include:

- *Wait Time*, measured as the percentage of individuals who indicated that their wait was too long; and by the average time of wait;
- *Promptness of Unemployment Insurance*, measured as the percentage of non-monetary decisions made on time; and the percentage of payments made within 21 days;
- *Employability Services*, measured as the percentage of Employment Service registrants receiving employability or other services; the percentage receiving group services; the percentage of newly-registered applicants undergoing assessment; and the percentage of registrants receiving a service within 30 days of assessment;
- *Referral and Placement*, measured as the percentage of registered applicants receiving at least one referral;

- *Voice Response*, measured as the percentage of calls transferred to staff that were unanswered on the third ring.

Context measures include:

- *Employment Services*, measured as the percentage of new job applicants who were fully registered;
- *Referral and Placement*, measured as the proportion of individuals referred to jobs to individuals placed; and the percentage of placements initiated from microfiche or kiosk;
- *Job Bank Effectiveness*, measured as the average number of referrals per purged job opening;
- *Voice Response*, measured as the percentage of continued UI claims processed by voice response.

The workload measure is:

- *UI Claims*, measured as the number of UI claims per full-time equivalent position.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The state of Connecticut received $7 million in combined funding for 1995 and 1996. Of this total, $5.9 million was for first- and second-year One-Stop implementation and $1.1 million was for improvements to its labor market information system (received as a separate grant during the first implementation year).

Of the available One-Stop implementation funds, $2.9 million was allocated to the nine workforce development regions. Most of these regional funds—$2.4 million—were allocated among the nine Regional Workforce Development Boards; the remainder was allocated to CTDOL regional offices.[5] The amount of money received by each region was negotiated, based on the region's demonstrable needs for (1) equipment and personnel to develop the capacity to provide self-service opportunities for One-Stop customers; and (2) other changes needed to transition to a One-Stop system, such as office redesign. Although grants to cover personnel costs were allowed, only those costs directly related to new functions brought about by the transition to One-Stop were approved. In some cases, for example, regions used One-

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[5] All figures are rounded.

Stop implementation funding to cover the cost of center "greeters" and or other staff needed to prepare for the transition to self-access services.

A total of $2.1 million in first and second year funding (the $1.1 million first-year LMI grant, plus another $1 million of One-Stop funding) has been allocated to upgrade information technology systems. These funds have covered the costs of installing automated labor market and occupational information on the state's public access network, installing and piloting the Talent Bank, developing a *Connecticut Works* Web site, providing links to the Connecticut Job Bank through the Internet, and purchasing and installing kiosks to provide access to statewide workforce development data. All of these systems were either being piloted or were fully operational at the time of the evaluation site visit.

Additional One-Stop funds retained at the state level have been allocated to executive and business costs ($630,000), staff development ($400,000), developing and implementing performance measures ($230,000), and marketing activities ($170,000).

State-level One-Stop funds have also been used to develop "incentive contracts" with each of the additional key state agency partners to increase their involvement in the One-Stop initiative. A contract for $90,000 with the State Department of Education (SDE) is being used to support SDE personnel who are conducting training workshops for local One-Stop staff on subjects such as adult basic education and integrating school-to-work initiatives into One-Stops. As part of this contract, SDE is also assisting CTDOL in developing occupational information databases and training staff in their use. Another contract of $130,000 was signed with the Department of Higher Education, which is providing educational and career information counseling to One-Stop customers via its toll-free hotline and conducting on-site educational counseling workshops at One-Stop centers. At the time of the site visit, a contract was also being negotiated with the Department of Community and Economic Development to cover costs associated with the co-location of three to four DECD staff persons in each of four One-Stop locations. At the time of the evaluation site visit, an agreement had not yet been reached for providing incentive funds to the Department of Social Services.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

With the reorganization of CTDOL in 1991, came a shift in values that identified the need to create an organization centered around "life-long learning." Drawing from the examples of successful private companies that had made large investments in capacity building—such as Federal Express, Xerox, and GTE—CTDOL planners recognized that they could not be successful in achieving their goals without a strong commitment to capacity building. Since 1991, staff development and training have come to occupy a central place in overall organizational decisions and in the development of local One-Stop centers.

CTDOL's Staff Development Unit (SDU) is comprised of eight full-time staff persons. According to SDU staff, it is important to avoid training that is perceived as something "done *to* people." Instead, capacity building should be rooted in a strategic planning process and should encourage staff to become familiar with and committed to long-term agency objectives. Moreover, capacity building efforts should not be viewed as discrete *training events,* but as ongoing initiatives, with training sessions followed by *post-training* at the local level. For this reason, SDU staff define their jobs not only as trainers, but as "performance consultants" to local areas.

At the time of the site visit, SDU staff had held three rounds of training on customer service in each of the regions. Staff from each of the 19 Job Centers in the state (including both CTDOL staff and staff from other agency partners) had undergone training in three "basic skills" modules focused on quality customer service. Training sessions were designed to (1) improve telephone service for customers; (2) enhance basic communication skills and encourage active listening and problem solving on the part of staff; and (3) develop skills in customer services specifically related to One-Stops.

Most current and prospective One-Stop staff in the state have also received SDU training sessions designed to provide an orientation to the *Connecticut Works* system and support inter-agency team building and cross-training. Teams of partner agencies from local offices are encouraged to work together in these sessions. Staff are presented with a variety of scenarios on dealing with customers and use role-playing techniques to practice responding to questions and requests for service and information. In addition to direct training, SDU has also developed "train the trainers" sessions and encouraged networks of peer-led training sessions and the involvement of field staff in peer-to-peer training programs. SDU hopes to encourage creativity in local offices and teach local staff to adopt the best practices used elsewhere in the state and the country.

Capacity building and staff development approaches have been closely coordinated with One-Stop system building efforts in the areas of (1) performance measurement, (2) staff support of labor market information and job search services, and (3) marketing efforts. Beginning in early 1996, the Staff Development Unit initiated a partnership with the Performance Measurement Unit to develop training on the analysis of performance measures contained in Job Center Quarterly Reports and target areas in which capacity building could support continuous improvement efforts.

SDU is collaborating with the information technology staff to develop technology curriculum units for supervisors and local staff. Although substantial investments in technology have been made and reporting systems are adequate, the largest challenge is training staff in the use of technology. According to one key respondent, "A lot of people have taught themselves at home, but we still have to cope with the problem of staff computer illiteracy. Many of the PC's on staff desks, for example, are only used to plug into the UI files. We want to accelerate the development of staff, but a lot of people are comfortable with the things they grew up with." Internet training began in mid-1996, to coincide with the development of an Internet Web site. Front-line staff dealing with customers were trained in the use of Netscape and the use of the Internet as a tool for the job search. Additional software training is planned for all *Connecticut Works* staff.

To support the delivery of high quality job search support services, SDU has also developed training modules based on the National Association of Resume Writers standards, and has certified approximately 30 staff from all 19 Job Centers as resume writers. Resume training was seen as particularly timely, since new skills are required of resume writers with the advent of new technologies such as Talent Banks in which job seekers can post their resumes electronically.

In coordination with the Performance Measures Committee, the Capacity Building Committee has conducted a "leadership survey" to determine the quality of staff supervisory skills. Front-line staff were asked to rate their supervisors on a variety of key leadership qualities. Supervisors also completed a self-assessment of their level of comfort with particular tasks; managers were also asked to assess the skills of supervisors. The results of the survey were used to assess the need for training to strengthen supervisorial and management skills. As a result of this assessment, leadership training for supervisor and management staff is planned. This training will cover change management and managing priorities, as well as the development of skills in communications, inter-personal relations, computers, and financial management.

Because Connecticut has a strong tradition of unionization, the state has had to address union issues that have arisen as a result of efforts to promote cross-training and redefine the job responsibilities of direct service staff in One-Stop centers. To address these issues, a cross-training committee has been formed in CTDOL. This 16-person committee, chaired by the director of Staff Development, is comprised of an equal number of union and management representatives. This committee holds on-going bi-monthly meetings which are intended (1) to keep union members informed of developments which are occurring as a result of CTDOL reorganization and the One-Stop initiative; and (2) address potential concerns of unions regarding such issues as salaries, job classification issues, and potential conflicts regarding job performance and job security issues associated with One-Stops.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

Under Connecticut's One-Stop implementation plan, providing readily accessible and easily understandable labor market information is a critical step in the move toward greater reliance on self-services. The overarching goal of Connecticut's LMI planners is to provide customers with a complete set of labor market information accessible at one convenient location. For job seekers, this means easier access to information to support all phases of the decision-making process from assessment of abilities and needs through the identification of potential employment opportunities. To help employers make informed decisions on starting new businesses or expanding existing operations, accurate information is needed that "packages" economic and workforce-related data on the skills of the existing workforce and availability of prospective employees.

The need to provide quality information to greater numbers of people has occurred at the same time that public workforce development resources have diminished. By sharing information that allows customers to make decisions on their own, valuable services can be provided at lower per unit costs. To the extent that customers can take advantage of self-services, this frees staff to devote more attention to people who need more intensive services. According to one key respondent:

> Tailoring the system to the needs of users is critical. The greatest gift that we can offer people is the ability to stretch their own growth in new directions. We

> need to think of ourselves as catalysts in this process—to be in the right place at the right time. This depends on our ability not only to gather reliable information, but to break it into the right pieces responsive to customer needs.

In its early LMI planning for One-Stops, the state set as a key objective the development of a strong information infrastructure based on integrated automated networks. Among the state's priority information system goals are the establishment of the following:

- A statewide information network accessible from the Internet;
- Remote access by customers to services and information;
- Public access to labor exchange systems;
- Access by all partners within the system to network information and services; and
- Comprehensive automated systems for employer services.

All of these goals have been substantially met. CTDOL has established an Internet home page on the World Wide Web with links to *Connecticut Works* pages that provide (1) a description of the purpose of the Centers and directions to each Center; (2) employment services with information and tips on searching for work and access to the state and national Job Banks; (3) information on unemployment compensation and the appeals process; (4) business services including self-service electronic job posting, information on programs for businesses and on finding suitable employees; (5) labor market information for job seekers, businesses, economists, and planners; and (6) America's Talent Bank, a nation-wide pool of resumes. The Talent Bank allows job-seekers to input information on their educational and career backgrounds and automatically generate a resume which can be used in hard copy and electronic form.

According to LMI respondents, a phenomenal amount of information has been available for years, but the major challenge of labor market information development has been accessibility — making it possible for people to "digest" the information that is available. Labor market information has not typically been understood by a wide audience, and Connecticut LMI developers are concerned with finding new ways of making existing information easier to use. The recent development of an Internet site is an important step in the direction of providing "snapshots" of information in a format that can be quickly understood. More information is provided in a visual format. In the near future, labor market planners hope to develop geographic mapping for LMI. By pointing and clicking on a map of the state, users could get a variety of sub-state information including local unemployment rates, the range of occupations in particular regions, street maps and mass transportation routes, day care and other services providers in local areas. Users could identify areas by region, town, and potentially by zip code area.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

At the time of the site visit there had been little progress in the integration of automated client-level information sharing among agencies at the state level. Individual reporting requirements have not changed with the adoption of One-Stop in Connecticut. The existing mainframe-based systems used for the UI and Wagner-Peyser programs do not communicate with other systems such as JTPA, which is currently shifting from a Unisys mainframe system to a PC-based client-server technology.

Rather than developing a statewide system for common intake of all One-Stop customers, the state has encouraged individual Centers in the development of common intake systems. Barriers to the development of a common intake form, according to MIS respondents, revolve around agency concerns about "who owns the data." Various state agencies also have concerns about client confidentiality and allowing access to data stored in the mainframes. Agreements will have to be reached on what data is "proprietary." (UI for example, does not routinely share information on customer change of addresses with other agencies.)

The major struggle for MIS developers is that they are often faced with expectations that exceed their capacity to develop systems. In addition, specifications for management information systems often have unrealistic price tags given current levels of funding. The major task for MIS developers is to establish what types of information should be considered "basic" across One-Stop programs, and what types of data constitute "enhancements." Because there has been a very rapid evolution over the last five years, starting with reorganization of the Connecticut Department of Labor in 1991, it has been difficult to keep up with changing needs. The challenge is to maintain a focus on the basic information needed.

Marketing

Although a marketing committee was established in mid-1994, state-level marketing plans were not yet formalized at the time of the evaluation site visit. Because the transition to a One-Stop system has not yet been completed, state planners have been hesitant to create customer expectations by publicizing the system. To date, marketing accomplishments include the creation of a name—*Connecticut Works*—and logo for the state's One-Stop system. Selecting a name for the system was a much larger challenge than had been expected. Since One-Stop Centers rely on a variety of sources of funding, some local areas initially expressed reservations about losing their identity or being "taken over" by a new system.

At the time of the time visit, however, some local areas were pressing the state for assistance marketing their local Centers because they believed that their One-Stop systems were ready to be publicized. As a result, marketing has been identified as a major priority for the One-Stop system during third-year implementation in 1997.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

During the One-Stop planning phase, Connecticut's goal was to certify fourteen of nineteen existing Job Centers as One-Stop Career Centers during the first year of implementation in 1995. As a result of implementation delays, only two Centers were certified as One-Stop centers during this first year. At the time of the site visit, seven *Connecticut Works* Centers had opened, and the remaining twelve Job Centers were scheduled to be certified as One-Stops during 1997.

Implementation delays occurred for several reasons including (1) the inability to achieve a timely convergence of lease, construction, information technology, and training requirements that had been established as prerequisites for certification; and (2) the change in state government executive leadership which resulted in a new round of state-level discussions about the goals of One-Stops, and in some cases, the re-negotiation of state partnership agreements. Another element that delayed implementation was the need to retrain center staff so that consistent information would be provided to individuals on areas such as UI and job search assistance. State planners also wanted to ensure that the information technology infrastructure in each Center was adequate to support later technological developments.

INFLUENCES ON STATE DESIGN AND LESSONS LEARNED

The 1990s have brought substantial reforms to Connecticut's workforce development system in the form of a reorganization of Connecticut's Labor Department and a recognition that regional boards should play a greater role in the development of workforce development plans and policies, in partnership with the state. The first priority of the *Connecticut Works* system has been to solidify the collaboration of Regional Workforce Development Boards and the Connecticut Department of Labor, building on the process that began with the creation of Transition Centers for dislocated workers. Beyond this core partnership, innovative partnerships have been forged with a number of state partners including the Departments of Education and Higher Education, the Department of Economic and Community Development, and the State Library. However, the absence of a formal agreement with the Department of Social Services for the integration of welfare-to-work services at One-Stop centers is a source of concern, in light of state and federal welfare reform legislation.

Connecticut has shown leadership in areas such as staff development and performance measurement. The Staff Development Unit has established priorities for the capacity building needs associated with the One-Stops initiative and has successfully coordinated its activities with those of other One-Stop system building efforts. The Performance Measurement Unit has established a core set of performance measures for *Connecticut Works* Centers and has helped to train staff at local Centers in the use of these measures. Through collaboration with the Staff Development Unit, an emphasis has been placed on ensuring that local area staff understand the relevance of performance measures and can use them in a way that promotes continuous improvement of services.

The state has, however, experienced a number of barriers that interfered with its original timeline for a rapid adoption of One-Stops statewide. These barriers have included difficulty coordinating schedules for the construction, renovation, and technological improvement of facilities. Finally, although many local areas have been successful in integrating funding streams and service delivery arrangements, others are still working through the process of team-building and negotiating roles for partner staff.

APPENDIX B

CONNECTICUT WORKS CAREER CENTER
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During July 1996

CONNECTICUT WORKS CAREER CENTER
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT
One-Stop Profile

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CONNECTICUT WORKS CAREER CENTER
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Over the last two decades, southeastern Connecticut—the area served by the New London *Connecticut Works* Career Center—has had the most defense-dependent economy in the nation. During the mid-1970s, over one-third of the region's workforce was directly employed by defense contractors or the military. Sixty percent of those employed in defense contracting worked for one company, Electric Boat, a manufacturer of nuclear submarines. In 1989, U.S. Department of Defense prime contracts in the New London metropolitan statistical area (MSA) totaled nearly $10,000 per MSA resident. This figure was over three times that of the MSA with the next highest figure—Fort Worth, Texas—and about ten times that of the three most defense-dependent areas in Southern California.

Between 1988 and 1996, a large number of defense-related jobs in the region were lost due to defense downsizing, including approximately 10,000 jobs at Electric Boat. The late 1980s and early 1990s were very difficult years for dislocated defense workers. Not only were unemployment rates high—over 7% for most of this period—but salaries for available jobs were much lower than those generally paid by defense contractors. Only after several new employers—including the nation's largest casino—opened for business in the mid-1990s did unemployment rates begin to decline to their current levels of about 5%.

As described in the Connecticut state One-Stop profile, the challenges associated with meeting the needs of dislocated defense and financial industry workers provided the initial impetus for close collaboration between the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL)—the state agency responsible for providing ES and UI services—and Regional Workforce Development Boards (RWDBs), which are responsible for setting and coordinating local education and training policy and administering JTPA and adult education funding. A system of Transition Centers—co-administered by the CTDOL and Regional Workforce Development Boards—tested a model for the integrated delivery of career services to dislocated workers. Transition centers for dislocated workers, in New London and elsewhere, served as an important bridge to providing integrated career services to a universal population.

In the spring of 1994, the Connecticut Legislature passed Public Act 94-116, which provided formal legislative authority for implementing a statewide system of Job Centers focused on the delivery of workforce development services to the general public. Under the One-Stop initiative, these Centers—named *Connecticut Works* Centers—are mandated to link the programs administered by the Connecticut Department of Labor, the Regional Workforce Development Boards, the Department of Economic and Community Development and other public and private education, human services, and employment and training providers in order to deliver coordinated workforce development services to employers and individuals.

The two "managing partners" in the New London *Connecticut Works* Career Center are the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) and the Southeast Connecticut Private Industry Council/Regional Workforce Development Board (PIC/RWDB).[1] As in other areas of the state, these agencies first started working together in 1989 to operate a Transition Center to address the issues arising out of major defense dislocations. In 1992, the PIC moved its entire operations into office space upstairs from the CTDOL Job Center. By the spring of 1994, these two agencies became the core tenants in the New London *Connecticut Works* Career Center.

Several key variables have influenced the development of the New London *Connecticut Works* Center. These factors include: (1) the opening of the New London One-Stop Center during a period of extensive economic restructuring; (2) the decision by the key partners to co-locate in a large modern office complex in the New London marina area, and (3) a strong commitment by Center partners to providing universal access to services and giving customers a choice among a wide variety of services. These contextual variables are briefly described below:

Because the region is only beginning to recover from the deep economic restructuring of the late 1980s and early 1990s, applications for Unemployment Insurance (UI) continue to draw large numbers of new customers to the Center. As customers come to the Center to apply for UI, they are introduced to the broad menu of services available at the Center. Many of these customers subsequently attend workshops or use a number of the other services available at the Center.

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[1] The board's name reflects its status as a "Workforce Development Board," while also maintaining the name "Private Industry Council" in order to emphasize the continued involvement of private industry. Use of the acronym "PIC" in this document refers to the pre-Workforce-Development-Board-era Private Industry Council. References to "RWDB" denote the current PIC/RWDB.

Key partners in the New London Connecticut Works initiative established the Center in an attractive and convenient location. By the fall of 1994, both CTDOL and the Regional Workforce Development Board had moved from the old dilapidated Job Center facility in downtown New London to the professional Shaws Cove office complex. Co-location in new space has made it possible for Center partners to increase the level of service integration and offer seamless services to customers. The new location is also large enough to accommodate the addition of staff from new partner agencies, such as economic development and social service agencies. In addition, the region's employers now have an attractive and convenient place to conduct on-site interviews with job candidates and training of new employees.

Center partners are committed to offering universal services and customer choice. Many services that were previously reserved for categorically funded program participants are now available to the general public. Also, the Center emphasizes providing customers with up-to-date and accurate information on the range of services available to them. This has resulted in a greater variety of service options for customers and an increase in the quality of vendor services.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Governance and Management Structure. According to the governance structure established by the state legislature, policy oversight and administration of the *Connecticut Works* Career Center system are shared by the Regional Workforce Development Boards and the Connecticut Department of Labor. Regional Workforce Development Boards are mandated to assess human resource development needs in their respective regions, plan for regional employment and training programs, oversee workforce programs and services, and coordinate a broad range of employment, education, training, and related services. Regional Boards also administer funds for JTPA Title II and Title III services and adult education funds.[2]

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[2] Although not required by the state, most RWDBs including Southeast Connecticut are moving away from providing JTPA services directly to offering policy oversight and administering third-party providers of these services.

Among their other duties, the Regional Boards are responsible for approving the annual service plans prepared by each of the *Connecticut Works* Centers in their region. After approval by the RWDB chair and the appropriate chief elected official, Career Center plans are forwarded to the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission—a statewide policy board—for approval.

A Local Management Committee has been established as a standing committee of the Southeast Connecticut Regional Workforce Development Board (RWDB) to oversee the operation of the two *Connecticut Works* Centers planned for this region. (At the time of the evaluation site visit, the New London Center was already operating as a One-Stop career center, while the Norwich Center was not yet operational as a consolidated One-Stop center.) As required by the state, key members of the Local Management Committee include the local CTDOL Job Center (ES/UI) director for each Center and the executive director of the Regional Workforce Development Board. At present, there are eight members of the Southeast Connecticut Local Management Committee, all of whom have voting privileges. The members of the Committee include:

- The New London Job Center director
- The Norwich Job Center director
- The executive director of Southeast Connecticut Regional Workforce Development Board
- The president of the Southeast Connecticut Chamber of Commerce
- The executive director of the Corporation for Regional Economic Development
- The regional director of the Department of Social Services
- The executive director of the Opportunity Industrialization Center
- The president (usually represented by the dean of continuing education) of the Three Rivers Community-Technical College

The Local Management Committee, chaired by the executive director of the Corporation for Regional Economic Development, operates primarily as an advisory body. Although the Management Committee has responsibility for reviewing and ratifying Center plans, the designated managers of the Center's two key partners—the CTDOL Job Center director and the RWDB program manager—make day-to-day operational decisions.

As in the other *Connecticut Works* Centers in the state, the CTDOL Job Center director has been designated the Center Director for the entire One-Stop center. Despite this title, there is still a clear division of management responsibility for Center operations by categorical programs and funding streams. The CTDOL Job Center director oversees all CTDOL-administered programs including Employment Services, Unemployment Insurance, and Veterans Employment Services. The RWDB program manager is responsible for administering JTPA Title II and Title III grants as well as Federal discretionary grants for dislocated workers.

As part of the integrated services approach of the New London Career Center, several functions are shared by the two agencies. For example, CTDOL and the RWDB jointly operate and staff a Career Services Center and a Resource Library. According to a detailed memorandum of understanding developed by the two partners, the RWDB program manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Career Services Center, including establishing staff schedules and supervising the CTDOL staff assigned to work in the Career Services Center. In carrying out this responsibility the RWDB program manager must plan and coordinate career service activities with the CTDOL Job Center Director and the RWDB Executive Director.

Participating Partners. In addition to the managing partners—CTDOL and RWDB—other state and local entities are also involved in the New London One-Stop initiative. The degree of participation of other local partners depends in large part on the existence of state level inter-agency agreements. The state agencies currently involved in the New London One-Stop Center include the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), the Department of Social Services (DSS), the State Department of Education (SDE), and the Department of Higher Education (DHE). Important local and regional partners include the Corporation for Regional Economic Development (CRED), Three Rivers Community Technical College, the non-profit Opportunity Industrialization Center (OIC), and a private provider of workforce services, Flath and Associates.

These organizations and their relations to the New London *Connecticut Works* Center are briefly described below:

- Throughout the state, the *Department of Economic and Community Development* (DECD) is being recruited as an active partner in the design and delivery of One-Stop business services in association with the Business Services Units operated by the Connecticut Department of

Labor. Pending the formalization of a state-level inter-agency agreement between CTDOL and DECD, the DECD plans to outstation four of its staff within the Business Services Unit of the New London Center, where they will assist CTDOL staff in providing comprehensive services to local businesses.

- *The Department of Social Service (DSS).* Although CTDOL and DSS have not reached a formal agreement at the state level, CTDOL hopes to involve DSS in providing on-site support services to customers at One-Stop centers. At the time of the site visit, an area within the Center had been allocated for DSS staff, but co-location of staff had been delayed by lack of a needed link to the DSS computer system. At the time of the site visit it was not yet clear what role the New London *Connecticut Works* Center would play in providing welfare-to-work services to customers affected by welfare reform.
- *The Department of Higher Education (DHE)*, under an interagency agreement with the CTDOL, provides information on education and career opportunities to all One-Stop customers via its toll-free hotline. DHE also provides electronic access to listings of accredited study programs offered by colleges and occupational schools throughout the state. Local institutions under DHE include the following:
  - *Three Rivers Community Technical College* is represented both on the Local Management Committee and the RWDB. The College sends a counselor to the Center once a month to meet with customers who are interested in upgrading their work skills. In addition, One-Stop partners refer individuals to college counselors to discuss plans for continuing education.
  - *Other Post-Secondary Schools*—such as the local branch of the University of New Haven, Grasso Technical School, and Norwich Regional Technical School—also send representatives to the Center on a monthly basis to offer workshops and counseling to Center customers.
- *The Department of Education* supports services to job seekers including those with substantial barriers to employment. Services available to Career Center customers through referral to service sites administered by local school districts include career decision-making workshops, bilingual vocational-technical programs, educational needs assessment, and career counseling. Adult Basic Education (ABE) is offered through programs at New London Adult Education and Norwich Adult Education.
- The *Corporation for Regional Economic Development* (CRED) is a non-profit economic development organization for the Southeast Connecticut region. CRED also serves as the liaison between the twenty cities and

towns of southeastern Connecticut and the regional DECD offices. CRED—which is located next to the New London *Connecticut Works* Center in a neighboring building in the Shaw's Cove business complex—helps existing businesses in the region to expand their operations and helps new businesses become established.

- The *Opportunity Industrialization Center* (OIC) of New London County, a private non-profit organization, has a prime contract through the Department of Social Services to provide vocational training and place trainees into employment. OIC is represented both on the RWDB and on the Local Management Committee.
- *Flath and Associates* is a private for-profit service vendor that has been particularly influential in developing and providing local services for dislocated workers. A number of the workshops originally developed for dislocated workers are now being adapted and offered to the general public at the New London *Connecticut Works* Career Center. Flath provides several of the Center's public workshops, including workshops on job search, resume writing, and interviewing techniques. Although Flath was originally invited to join the Local Management Committee, state policy excludes for-profit firms from participating on these committees.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Partners in the New London *Connecticut Works* Career Center have developed several communication mechanisms at the local level to coordinate their system-building efforts. In addition, local partners communicate frequently with state One-Stop policy makers in the development of One-Stop systems.

Communication among Regional Partners. The Local Management Committee provides a forum in which One-Stop partners can discuss regional workforce policy objectives. During meetings of the Management Committee, local partners assess educational, economic development, and workforce development needs in the region and advise Center managers about how to address the needs of business and individual customers. The Local Management Committee also serves as a forum for resolving any disagreements that may arise about the duties and responsibilities of the managing partners and Career Services staff.

Communication among Center Staff and Managers. Local respondents indicated that good communication and coordination of activities among CTDOL and RWDB staff are essential to providing good service to Center customers. Cross-agency committees have been formed to facilitate communication about issues related to the planning and operation of the Center. Committees have been particularly important in shaping aspects of Career Center operations that involve staff from multiple partners. Committees have included:

- *Greeter Committee.* An important feature of the delivery of One-Stop services in the New London Career Center is the use of a "greeter." Greeters meet customers when they come in the door, answer initial questions, give a brief description of services available at the Center, and direct customers to appropriate areas of the Center. The greeter position is cross-staffed by CTDOL and the RWDB. The greeter committee was formed during Center planning to discuss the roles of greeters and how the position should be staffed. This committee is no longer active.
- *Resource Library Committee.* The library committee was established to evaluate existing career library resources and to discuss Resource Library staffing needs. The committee has made recommendations for the acquisition of library materials. Both CTDOL and RWDB have provided materials for the resource library, although CTDOL has made the bulk of library purchases.
- *Job Bank Committee.* Originally established to create uniform procedures for entering job orders, the Job Bank Committee has since expanded to give staff the opportunity to communicate on a broad range of technical questions including collecting and sharing job data and using the Talent Bank, which is being piloted in several *Connecticut Works* Centers, including New London.
- *Communications Committee.* The Communications Committee is charged with establishing a practical means for staff from both managing partner agencies receive timely and accurate information. Members have also developed an in-house public calendar of One-Stop events for use by partners as well as customers.
- *Talent Bank Committee.* This committee was being formed to develop workshops and other materials to facilitate customer use of the Talent Bank.

Communication Between the State and Local Levels. To ensure that the local perspective is represented in state plans for the *Connecticut Works* system, state policy makers have invited representatives of local sites to participate in statewide planning committees on various topics. For example, even the inter-agency "Statewide Planning Committee" for One-Stop is co-chaired by CTDOL's Deputy Commissioner for Employment and Training and the Director of New Haven's Regional Workforce Development Board (RWDB). The executive director of the New London RWDB served as co-chair of the state's Local Planning Committee, which established procedures for local One-Stop planning and implementation and developed guidelines for funding and certifying *Connecticut Works* Centers.

To support ongoing One-Stop operations, the state-level *Connecticut Works* office within the Connecticut Department of Labor provides regular updates on One-Stop policy and implementation issues to local Career Center directors. The *Connecticut Works* Office also sponsors quarterly management team meetings—with participation by state *Connecticut Works* staff, CTDOL Job Center directors, and Workforce Development Boards directors—in order to promote communication among state and regional staff. These meetings provide an opportunity for peer networking, allowing directors to take compare notes on problems they have encountered in One-Stop implementation.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The Southeast Connecticut Region was allocated a total of $400,000 from the state's first and second year DOL One-Stop implementation grants to support system transformation at the New London Career Center.[3] The Regional Workforce Development Board was the principal grant administrator, responsible for $325,000 in implementation grant funds. The regional office of the Connecticut Department of Labor received the remainder of the grant. State allocations to One-Stop regions were intended to address regional needs to develop the capacity to provide self-service opportunities for One-Stop customers and support other changes needed to transition to a One-Stop system, such as office design. Although grants to cover personnel costs were allowed, only those costs directly related to new functions brought about by the transition to One-Stop were approved.

The regional office of the Connecticut Department of Labor used its $75,000 in implementation grant funds to defray the costs of moving CTDOL operations to the One-Stop center; purchasing equipment such as personal computers, workstations, and conference room furniture; and installing a new telephone network. The RWDB used its portion of the One-Stop implementation grant:

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[3] A small portion of the grant funds (less than $5000) was set aside for planning the transformation of the Norwich Job Center into a One-Stop career center.

- To develop the infrastructure to connect the Regional Workforce Development Board to the CTDOL information network;
- To help pay for services provided by outside contractors, including workshops that are open to the general public;
- To help pay for the salaries and benefits of RWDB personnel providing services to the general public, including assisting customers in the Career Services Center, helping to conduct intake and JTPA certification, providing career counseling, and helping customers prepare resumes.

The One-stop grant also supported RWDB costs for purchasing a copier and marketing One-Stop services.

In addition to the One-Stop grant, other sources of funding have been used to help Center operations. Much of the activity of Center partners is supported from Wagner-Peyser and JTPA program funds. The Center has been piecing together these funds to support One-Stop universal services. One example is a recently upgraded phone bank that now has nineteen lines. Although some One-Stop funds are used to support the phone bank, it is also supported by a Governor's Reserve Title III discretionary grant for dislocated workers. Respondents indicated that the cost accounting and cost allocation procedures they have to use to support One-Stop operations cause significant strains; they encouraged efforts to create integrated financing and reporting systems for One-Stop centers at the federal level. Center partners are concerned about how they will support such services as assistance with resume preparation for the general public after implementation grant funding expires. Possibilities discussed include charging customers for some costs and using volunteers to help customers.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

Although their relations were historically somewhat rocky, CTDOL and the Southeast Connecticut Private Industry Council began to coordinate in 1987 to provide services to dislocated defense industry workers. In response to large layoffs, CTDOL would outstation ES/UI staff at the company to process UI claims, counsel laid off workers, assist them with resume writing and other aspects of job search, and certify EDWAA-eligible individuals. PIC staff were involved in conducting needs assessments for EDWAA participants and arranging for retraining services for workers affected by many of the same layoffs.

In 1989, the PIC received a $50,000 grant to administer a Transition Center that would coordinate services available to dislocated workers from multiple agencies, including CTDOL and the PIC. As a result of their frequent interactions in connection with operating the Transition Center, the two agencies gradually became familiar with each other's programs and service procedures. Recognizing the mutual benefits to be obtained from a closer working relationship, the PIC/RWDB relocated its offices in late 1992 to a space above CTDOL's Job Center in downtown New London. However the physical facility was far from ideal. The building had been burned in a fire and Job Center offices had suffered smoke damage. The offices had faulty air conditioning and staff described the building as "dismal." However, closer proximity gave CTDOL and PIC/RWDB staff an opportunity to become well acquainted. At that time, PIC/RWDB and CTDOL staff began to discuss coordinating services in a way that would better serve their mutual customers. They also began to plan for permanent co-location in a more attractive site.

One year before the announcement of the availability of federal One-Stop implementation grants, a joint committee formed of CTDOL managers and PIC/RWDB board and staff was charged with locating an office space that would accommodate both partners. "We didn't do this for One-Stop," said one Board staff member. "The pieces happened to come together at the right time. We had been thinking for some time about designing a system for southeastern Connecticut that would include many of the elements found in the current One-Stop." The joint committee decided that the modern and well-landscaped Shaw's Cove complex near the harbor in New London would be an excellent location for a One-Stop. The building complex had other positive attributes—both partners saw it as an attractive location with room to grow as the partnership expanded.

Physical Facilities

The Southeast Connecticut PIC/RWDB was the first tenant to move into the office space of the ground floor of the present Shaws Cove location in the spring of 1994. In August 1994, the dislocated worker Transition Center moved its operations to the new location. One month later, in September, CTDOL relocated its Job Center into an adjoining space in the same building.

The New London *Connecticut Works* Center now occupies 2250 square feet on the ground floor of a large, modern red-brick building in an attractive and well-landscaped office complex. The Center—identified by a sign above the main public entry as a *Connecticut Works* Career Center—is divided into three major areas. On one side are the PIC/RWDB offices; on the other side is the CTDOL Job Center. Between the space occupied by each agency, and directly behind the main public entry is a Career Services Center, which offers the general public variants of many of the services previously provided to dislocated workers in the Transition Center.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

The New London *Connecticut Works* Center has made substantial progress toward the four federal One-Stop goals of providing universal access to services, making a range of service options available to customers, integrating services, and developing a system in which information is used to promote the continuous improvement of services. Many of the specific services available to customers that reflect these four federal themes are described in a later section on the "Delivery of One-Stop Services to Customers." The following sections are intended to provide are brief overview of the Center's approach to these federal themes.

Universal Access

One of the most visible impacts of the One-Stop initiative in New London has been the expansion of services available to the general public. Center partners have accomplished this by building on the tradition of high-quality customer services available in the (pre-One-Stop) Transition Center for dislocated workers. The popularity of the New London Transition Center was based on the fact that it was, in the words of one key respondent, "a friendly place to become reemployed—customers did not feel they were in a government facility and there was no 'take a number and wait' approach."

The important difference under One-Stop is that many of the services that were previously reserved for participants of categorically funded programs are now available to the general public. Services available to all customers include group workshops, one-on-one assistance with resume preparation, as well as access to the phone bank, fax machines, and copiers. As part of its universal services, the New London Center offers customers a range of levels of staff support.

All customers are invited to receive an orientation to the One-Stop Center that covers the goals of the *Connecticut Works* system. The orientation also provides customers with an overview of the education, training, employment, and support services that are either available at the Center or through referral to other organizations. Services available to all job seekers also include a range of services that can be accessed on a self-service basis. For example, job seekers have access to a Resource Library as well as a large phone bank and messaging service. Customers may use Talent Bank software to produce formatted hard-copy resumes as well as post electronic versions that are available to employers through the Internet.

Group workshops are an important element of the Center's universal services. All customers may attend a four-day, sixteen-hour Job Search and Career Workshop, provided by a contracted service provider, that covers the important steps in a successful job search. Topics discussed include resume preparation, networking, targeting employers, and preparing for the job interview. Other workshops are offered either as follow-ups to the Job Search and Career Workshop, or are targeted to specific audiences. Examples of the former are workshops on advanced interviewing techniques and stress management. Examples of the latter—which are usually provided by vendors—are specialized job search workshops for individuals over forty and people with specific skills such as engineers.

For customers who want or need more individualized staff support, customers may receive assistance in preparing resumes from several staff members in the Center. Staff often act as "facilitators," explaining to customers new to the system how to use the automated resume preparation software. In other cases, staff provide greater levels of assistance, particularly for people with little experience in writing resumes. In these cases, staff may conduct an interview with the customer about her experience, input the information, and review the formatted resume with the customer.

To support universal services, the Center has used One-Stop implementation grant funding as well as funds from other sources. The extent to which the Center will be able to continue providing the current level of services to the general public after the One-Stop grant is exhausted, however, is not clear. Staff believe, for example, that they may not be able to continue the level of clerical support provided to customers. Resume preparation assistance—a services that typically costs $150 to $350 from other sources—may also be discontinued. Center management may either begin to refer customers to private providers or to charge fees for typing resumes.

Customer Choice

The Connecticut vision for One-Stop emphasizes that effective customer choice begins by providing customers the information they need to make informed choices about career possibilities. In line with this vision for One-Stop, Center staff emphasize the importance of long-term "career planning" services as opposed to merely "job search" assistance. Counselors often discuss long-term career objectives with customers, helping them to map out a plan for job search and career development, and informing them of useful educational, training, or support services. The Center currently maintains a list of two hundred service providers in the region.

Customers can also access a variety of information from off-site. Examples include toll-free access via modem to the Public Access Labor Market Information System (PALIS) bulletin boards. Customers with Internet service can also access a variety of services via CTDOL's World Wide Web site. One such service is America's Talent Bank, which allows Internet users to compose and post resumes from off-site locations. Customers are also able to enroll for unemployment benefits either in person at the Center, or by telephone to a regional center.

Current hours of Center operation are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Partners are discussing the possibility of offering extended hours of service during evenings and weekends, but there are still substantial barriers to this. Because the services most likely to be of interest to job seekers during off-hours are available through the Career Services Center—which is cross-staffed by non-unionized RWDB employees and unionized CTDOL employees—an agreement with the union would be essential. Until now, however, the state employee's union has resisted having its members work during extended hours. Also, because of the Center's open layout, it would be difficult to restrict access to areas of the Center that would be closed during extended hours. In addition, new agreements, would also have to be negotiated with the landlord to provide heating during evening hours or on weekends.

Integrated Services

Many Center services have been integrated and are cross-staffed, including (1) "greeters" at the entrance to the facility; (2) a Resource Library with access to written and electronic information on jobs, careers, and education and training providers; and (3) a Career Services Center offering the general public a range of group workshops, self-assisted services, and one-on-one staffed services.

CTDOL and the RWDB both share responsibility for providing "greeters" in the area just inside the main customer entrance to the One-Stop. The main function of the greeter is to direct customers to appropriate areas of the Center and to address questions or problems that can be dealt with fairly quickly (the rule of thumb is five minutes or less). Especially during periods following large-scale layoffs, greeters are very busy "directing traffic." During less busy periods they can spend more time answering questions and providing information to customers. RWDB currently has been given less responsibility for staffing the greeter area than CTDOL, because many of the questions asked by new Center customers concern unemployment benefits and these questions are best fielded by CTDOL employees.

A Resource Library available for use by job-seekers is also cross-staffed by CTDOL and RWDB. The library is in an open and inviting space. In the Career Services Center, counselors from both CTDOL and RWDB work with customers to develop career plans, support resume development, and provide workshops on a variety of job-search topics.

In addition to integrating services for individuals, New London partners are also committed to the idea of becoming a "One-Stop for employers." The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and the Corporation for Regional Economic Development (CRED) have been active partners in the New London One-Stop. Both organizations have worked closely with the CTDOL Business Services Unit (BSU) to help new and expanding businesses in the southeastern Connecticut region with their workforce development needs. This collaboration has been very successful—the partnership has succeeded in attracting several large new employers to the region, including the Pequot Shipworks, a manufacturer of ferry boats. A recent decision to co-locate several DECD employees in the Center's Business Services Unit represents a further positive step in the integration of services to employers.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Staff of the New London Career Center use a variety of information to help them improve services to customers. As in all of Connecticut's One-Stops, staff conduct quarterly reviews based on a standardized set of core measures developed by CTDOL's Performance Measurement Unit. These measures, designed to offer a balanced picture of Center performance, provide staff with information that allows them to compare outcomes for their customers with those for other offices in the state and to identify areas in which services can be improved. Some of these performance measures include: indices of overall individual and employer customer satisfaction, entered employment rates, and the average time it takes customers receive services or benefits (see Connecticut state profile for a complete list of performance measures).

In addition to reviewing their own performance on a regular basis, the Center partners also collect detailed information on service providers. Although the Center has not yet implemented a formal system of "report cards" for vendors, Career Services staff routinely collect information on customer satisfaction and job placement rates from many of the training programs to which customers are referred. When a customer is interested in further education, for example, she can receive detailed information on area schools, including the types of courses or degree programs offered, as well as information on entered employment rates for specific programs. Board respondents believe that increased local separation between JTPA oversight/administration and service delivery—what they termed an "honest broker" approach—has helped to improve the quality of services provided to customers.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

As described in the section on service integration above, many of the Center's services targeted to universal customers are cross-staffed. Categorically-funded programs, however, have continued to be administered the same way they were prior to One-Stop implementation. For example, Unemployment Insurance, Wagner-Peyser, and Veterans Services continue to be administered within the Center by CTDOL staff and managers, while JTPA programs are administered by the RWDB staff and managers.

As described under integrated services, CTDOL and the RWDB share responsibility for staffing the "greeter" area. The Career Services Center and a Resource Library are also cross-staffed by CTDOL and RWDB. The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) was expected to outstation four staff within the Center's Business Services Unit (BSU) by March 1997, although the details of the nature and degree of service integration between CTDOL and DECD staff in operating the Business Services Unit had not yet been defined at the time of the evaluation visit.

Staffing issues have, on occasion, presented problems for Center directors. During the first year of One-Stop operation, lines of authority for dealing with staffing issues were not always clear. For example, although the RWDB program manager is responsible for managing the Career Services Center, some CTDOL staff assigned to Career Services would raise concerns with the CTDOL agency director, rather than with the RWDB program manager. Center partners drafted an addendum to their original memorandum of understanding (MOU) that clearly describes the different roles of the managing partners. Under the revised MOU, the RWDB Program Manager was given formal responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Career Services Center and for the coordination of staffing assignments. The MOU addendum described a series of steps employees and management would take in the event of a disagreement. If necessary, staffing disputes can be brought to the Local Management Committee for adjudication. Both parties, however, attempt to resolve any problems in a cooperative manner and at the lowest level of intervention possible.

Capacity Building

Beginning in 1991, CTDOL began a major reorganization. One of the goals of this reorganization was to transform CTDOL into an organization centered on "life-long learning" through capacity building. The vision of CTDOL's Staff Development Unit (SDU) is that capacity building should encourage staff to become familiar with and committed to long-term agency objectives. Furthermore, capacity building should not be limited to training sessions of limited duration but should be an ongoing process. As a result of this philosophy, the state has been an active partner with local One-Stop sites in preparing staff to operate in the One-Stop environment.

Prior to the opening of the New London Center as a One-Stop career center, many New London partners were introduced to One-Stop goals through a series of informal staff orientations. In the early spring of 1995, New London became the first site in Connecticut to pilot SDU's One-Stop orientation curriculum. Local CTDOL and RWDB staff led the orientation session, after meeting with SDU staff to help prepare them for the training. The four-hour orientation covered topics such as managing the transition to One-Stop, the history of workforce development in the state leading to the "road to One-Stop Career Centers." Presenters also explained the four federal One-Stop goals and the state's "inverted pyramid" principle of One-Stop service delivery, in which customers accessing self-services allow staff time to spend with those who need more intensive services. SDU also conducted sessions for all One-Stop partners on how to develop workshops.

Center partners have initiated several other local capacity-building sessions. For example, eight staff members from CTDOL and the RWDB have been trained to provide customers with orientations to Center services. Many New London Career Center staff members have attended a series of SDU-sponsored "Quest for Quality" workshops conducted by the Local Management Team that are designed to improve the quality of customer service in a One-Stop environment. These sessions covered improving basic communication skills, encouraging active listening and problem solving abilities, and improving telephone service for customers. Because this training was conducted after the Center was already functioning as a One-Stop however, staff persons indicated that although the sessions were useful, they believed that the New London Center had already established many of the best customer practices that were encouraged during these sessions.

Other New London staff members have received training in how to assist customers with resume writing, following training modules developed by SDU. These modules, designed to certify local staff as resume writers, were seen as particularly useful because many of the techniques can be used to support customer use of the electronic resume posting capabilities of the Talent Bank. Internet training also began in mid-1996—most front-line employees in Career Services have now been trained to assist customers to use the Internet as a job-search tool.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

The New London One-Stop has benefited from state's emphasis on providing readily accessible and easily understandable labor market information as part of self-service options at One-Stops. For several years, the state has maintained a bulletin board service for job seekers, which is accessible toll-free throughout the state by modem. In 1996, CTDOL also began offering access to a variety of information through its Internet World Wide Web site. Through the state's Internet home page, job seekers can access information on state and national Job Banks, get tips on their job search, post their resumes on America's Talent Bank, find information on unemployment compensation, review labor market trends, and find out which career areas are in greatest demand in the state. Students can also access an "LMI for Students" Web site that suggests how to select a career path and describes the types of attributes that employers value most in their workers. Businesses can post job openings electronically and review Talent Bank resumes. They can also obtain a variety of information on OSHA and ADA compliance as well as on wage and workplace standards.

According to local respondents, many of these technological improvements have been very well received, particularly by individual customers. Customers and staff alike have been pleased with the Talent Bank and its ability to generate high quality resumes. Many job seekers in the New London region have posted their resumes on the Talent Bank's Internet site either from computers available at the Center or from off-site. Because it is still in a pilot phase and has not yet been broadly marketed to employers, businesses have been slow to use the Talent Bank to recruit new employees. It is however expected that a larger part of CTDOL's labor exchange function will become automated as employers and job seekers become more familiar with the capabilities of the Talent Bank. As a result, local staff see the development of new labor market information technology-based products as important developments in moving toward an "inverted pyramid" model in which progressively more customers can access services through a self-service mode.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

One-Stop partners view the integration of management information systems as an important long-term goal for One-Stops, but indicated that it has been difficult to achieve an optimal level of integration. The New London One-Stop has not yet implemented a system for integrated intake, although local partners have developed several drafts of an integrated intake form. Although all partners now have access to CTDOL data from their desktop computers, developing an automated system to share client-level information has proven difficult.

CTDOL's existing mainframe-based systems used for the UI and Wagner-Peyser programs was described as "reliable," and has been in place for many years. CTDOL is currently developing a new system of self-registration for employment services that will be implemented in the near future.

The automated information system used by Regional Workforce Development Boards has proven to be less satisfactory. Although the system was sold to SDAs as a way to combine automated case management and aggregate reporting functions, the report-generating functions of the system are inadequate. Importing and exporting data from the system has also been difficult. As a result, SDAs have independently developed their own information systems for use in tracking services and reporting customer outcomes. RWDB staff complain that they spend many hours inputting information into two separate systems.

Despite the fact that it has not yet been possible to integrate automated data systems, partner agencies can now share information using electronic networks. While previously, staff from CTDOL or RWDB had to walk over to each other's offices to enter data, CTDOL and RWDB staff can now access each other's databases from their own offices. This has proved particularly useful for Regional Workforce Development Board staff, who can now access CTDOL information on JTPA clients from their own offices. Through a local area network, RWDB and CTDOL employees in the New London Center can also share information concerning organizational, fiscal, administrative matters affecting One-Stop operations. Through a wide area network, all One-Stop staff can exchange e-mail with CTDOL in Wethersfield and in other career centers across the state. By the end of 1996, all staff were scheduled to have access to electronic mail and data transfer capabilities through the Internet.

Marketing

Marketing One-Stop career centers was not a priority at the state level during the first year of Connecticut's implementation grant. New London staff attributed this to the state's reluctance to make a "big splash" with a statewide marketing campaign until the One-Stop system is fully implemented throughout the state. Partners associated with the New London Career Center expressed frustration with the lack of a statewide marketing campaign, because they believe they are "in the forefront" in terms of offering high quality customer service and are ready to let customers know about the services available to them through career centers. As one staff member stated, "We're doing so many good things here, but to keep doing them, we also have to publicize our success stories. At the same time, however, New London staff were wary about "over-promising" their ability to meet customer needs. "Right now there's a two-thousand person layoff at Electric Boat," said one staff member. "When you want to advertise your services under these conditions, you'd better be sure that you can deliver on your promises."

All agreed that one of the challenges ahead of them will be to better publicize One-Stop services available to job seekers and employers. A small amount of local One-Stop funds was used to produce a brochure describing the services available to job seekers at One-Stop career centers. The next priority is to develop new materials for employer customers. Several staff members noted that in many cases they were distributing materials that were out of date and that did not reflect many of the new services available to employers. With the inclusion of the Department of Economic and Community Development as an active One-Stop partner, for example, the Business Services Unit now offers a number of enhanced services to employers, but few of these services are publicized in existing materials. According to one Business Services representative:

> We don't do enough now to educate companies about what we do. We often assume that they know what we do, but in fact most companies still associate our work only with unemployment insurance. A lot of times, they remember the negative things. But that's one of the dilemmas that we have. On the one hand, we're required by law to enforce unemployment insurance regulations, and on the other hand, we have so many great services that we can offer to businesses.

Center respondents distinguished between formal and informal marketing of One-Stops. Informal marketing, they pointed out, includes efforts to market the system to customers on a daily basis through orientation sessions. Center staff have found that word of mouth is also an effective marketing tool—a number of customers have been pleased with the services they received at the Center and have told their friends about what was available. They also pointed to Center-sponsored job fairs as a good marketing tool to reach both employers and individual job seekers. They were, however, aware of the need to work more with local media using formal marketing initiatives to promote Center services.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

The New London Career Center uses the metaphor of an *inverted pyramid* to describe its service delivery system. The system is based on three tiers of service: self-services, group services, and individualized services. Career Center staff see as their major function as facilitators—helping customers to use available resources. Self- and group services are essential elements of the system, in order to achieve universal access and maximize customer choice. At the same time, staff are committed to meeting the special needs of those customers requiring more intensive services.

Core Services. "Core services" at the New London Career Center are defined as those available to the general public at no cost. Some of these services are available through the Resource Library, while others are available through the Career Services Center. The Resource Library offers customers a number of self-access services, with support from a resource librarian as needed. The resource librarian serves two major functions: (1) assisting job seekers with job service registration and job referrals; and (2) promoting career development by providing customers with information on jobs, careers, and education and training providers. The Resource Library contains reference materials on companies. It also contains materials on resume writing and job search strategies as well as newspapers and trade magazines containing job listings. Hard copies of job listings from neighboring Rhode Island are also available in the Resource Library. The Resource Library permits customers to check out a variety of printed literature and videos related to the job search for two to four days.

Both the Resource Library and the Career Services Center have computer work stations from which customers can access on-line job listings from the state's job bank as well as America's Job Bank. Additional services available in the Career Service Center include:

- Assistance with resume-writing and posting resumes on the Talent Bank;
- Access to free fax machines and telephones for contacting employers;
- On-line and printed labor market information;
- Information on and referrals to other community resources; and
- Information on scholarships and career training.

In addition to the self-service options described above, a variety of group activities and workshops are available to all Center customers. All job seekers attend a regularly scheduled orientation session. At these orientation sessions—which take approximately twenty to thirty minutes—customers are provided handouts describing Center services, the Center schedule of activities for the month, and the layout of the Center. They are also told how to sign up to use the fax machines, computers, and the telephone bank. Special workshops are also highlighted during the orientations. All customers who have completed an orientation session are eligible to attend a wide assortment of workshops and seminars provided on-site in the Center's conference rooms. Workshops and seminars currently offered at the Center include:

- Pre-Employment Skills Workshops
- Vocational Exploration
- Four-Day Job Search and Career Workshop
- Managing Job Loss Seminars
- Interviewing Techniques
- Advanced Interviewing Techniques
- Resume and Cover Letter Preparation

- Job Search for Persons over Forty: Overcoming Age Barriers
- Specialized Workshops (e.g., for engineers, computer technicians)
- Entrepreneurship Seminars
- Education Seminars and Fairs.

Many of these workshops were originally designed to be part of a comprehensive menu of services available to participants eligible for categorical programs as part of an individual training and reemployment plan. Currently, however, all of the workshops and seminars offered on-site are open to all customers, regardless of their eligibility for categorically funded services. In addition to the services offered on-site, staff also refer customers with substantial employment barriers to programs offered through the state's Department of Education. These programs include:

- Career Decision-Making Workshops
- Bilingual Vocational-Technical Programs
- Educational Needs Assessment
- Career Counseling
- Adult Basic Education (ABE) through New London Adult Education and Norwich Adult Education programs
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- General Equivalency Diploma (GED).

Several post-secondary schools—including a local branch of the University of New Haven, Three Rivers Community Technical College, Grasso Technical School, and Norwich Regional Technical School—also come to the Center on a monthly basis to offer workshops and counseling to Center customers. All Center customers also have access to the Department of Higher Education's education and career opportunities hotline.

Non-Core Services. Although Center staff attempt to offer an array of universal services, some specialized services are available only to customers funded under specific categorical programs. For customers qualifying for these programs, available services include an individual assessment of basic skills, interests, and aptitudes and development of a job search or training plan. Other services include tuition assistance in approved training, career interest matching, financial aid counseling, and continuing individualized job search assistance. Some of these services are briefly described below.

- *Assessment and Testing.* Center staff use the Connecticut Competency System (CCS) and a variety of interest and career exploration inventories to help JTPA-eligible customers develop an individualized training or education plan.
- *Case Management.* Case management services are available to all customers eligible for Veterans' Employment and Training Services, Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services, and JTPA services.
- *Counseling.* Counseling on job and career issues is available by appointment. These services may be available to non-categorically funded customers depending on the demand for these services.
- *Relocation Assistance.* Relocation assistance is available to dislocated workers through the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and JTPA Title III.
- *Transition Assistance Program (TAPS).* As part of the TAPS program for veterans, Veteran's Representative from the New London and Norwich Centers offer a two-day workshop every month for enlisted men and women at the U.S. Submarine Naval Base in Groton. The program is intended to help military service personnel manage stress related to the job search and job development process during the transition to civilian employment.

Services for Employer Customers

As part of CTDOL's reorganization, Business Services Units were established in nine regions of Connecticut in 1992. Although CTDOL staffs Business Services Units (BSU), Business Service staff have forged close alliances with the Department of Economic and Community Development(DECD) and the Regional Workforce Development Boards under the One-Stop system. Business Services staff place a strong emphasis on providing services appropriate to the needs of their employer customers. Through their inter-agency alliances, Business Services Units hope to become One-Stop "brokers of services" for businesses—offering a range of direct services as well as facilitating contacts for employers with other relevant agencies and organizations.

Core services. Core services currently available to all employers include the following:

- *Labor Exchange and Recruitment of Job Applicants.* These services include posting listings of job openings; maintaining current listings on the Job Bank; and providing job matching, job development, recruitment, and applicant screening services for employers for full-time or part-time jobs.

- *Information and Technical Assistance.* Business Service staff inform business about issues related to quality, employee performance, and labor and UI laws and regulations.
- *Apprenticeship Programs.* All USDOL-sponsored apprenticeship programs are available through the Center.
- *One-Stop Business Registry.* In collaboration with DECD partners, businesses can now complete all of their state business registration requirements at the Center.
- *Employer Needs Assessment.* Staff consult with businesses to identify their training and employment needs.
- *Case Management.* The Business Services Unit plans to expand case management services to employer customers. Many regional employers, particularly large employers, have already been assigned a case manager who acts as their principal point of contact at the Center.
- *Employer Seminars.* These cover various topics such as UI regulations, workplace standards, labor market information, OSHA, and using Internet.

Non-Core Services. Non-core services available to businesses eligible for special funding and credits include:

- *Workforce Development Services.* These include tax credit programs for employers seeking to hire individuals from targeted populations; customized job training.
- *Downsizing Support.* These services include assistance from rapid response teams, which provide on-site services to address the needs of employers experiencing major layoffs and their workers.

One of the most important services that the Center provides to businesses is arranging for interviewing of job applicants. Center staff regularly help employers to review job applications and conduct interviews both at the Center and at the business location. "Many companies simply don't have the staff to do all of the things necessary to recruit workers," said one Business Services Unit employee. "Because of all of the help they can get here with their recruitment needs, we are seeing many repeat customers."

The new Center location in the Shaws Cove business complex is attractive to business managers who were reticent about coming to the dilapidated facilities of the old Job Center. According to one Business Services Unit staff member:

> Employers wouldn't come to us before. There wasn't even any parking for them. Employers actually seem to like coming here now . . . It's a clean and modern environment. We can brag about our conditions here. Not only that, but instead of paying up to $185 a day for a hotel room to interview job seekers, employers can interview job seekers here at no cost.

In addition to the new physical environment, businesses are also attracted by the new psychological environment that promotes coordination and resource-sharing among agencies. For example, a Job Fair held at the Center one week before the evaluation visit was co-sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Labor, the Regional Workforce Development Board, the Department of Social Services, the New London City Welfare Agency, as well as several community organizations and JTPA Title II service providers. This Job Fair—which was primarily oriented to helping find jobs for disadvantaged and under-employed customers—attracted about forty companies. Staff attributed the success of this Job Fair at least in part to the atmosphere of inter-agency cooperation as well as to the One-Stop's convenient and attractive location.

Another change in employer services under the One-Stop system is what staff described as a more proactive role in reaching out to employers. Instead of waiting for employers to come to the Center, Center staff regularly read the business section of local newspapers and actively search out new employers. When they are in the field, Business Service Unit staff look for signs of new business construction that will help them identify prospective employers. At the same time, Business Services Unit staff realize that there are limits to how many businesses they can contact. They believe that formal marketing efforts are essential to get the word out to employers. "A lot of employers don't know what we're doing," said one staff member.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Employers

We were unable to arrange for a focus group with individual customers at the New London *Connecticut Works* Career Center, but a focus group was held with six area employers. Five employer representatives were from the human resources departments of large area employers and a sixth was the owner of a small contracting firm. The focus group employers indicated that they were very satisfied with the services available to them at the New London Center. Although all of the businesses represented in the focus group posted job listings with the Center, several were not aware of the wide range of services available to employers.

Among the services that the employer respondents had used were recruitment/referral of job candidates, information sessions for employers (e.g., on affirmative action programs), and attendance at a Center-sponsored Job Fair. Employers expressed interest in finding qualified workers for their businesses as well as in helping the government move individuals off public assistance into jobs. One employer located in a more suburban location identified a need to lobby for improved transportation between central city and suburban locations to enable employers to find workers and move people from inner-city areas from welfare into jobs.

One human resources manager emphasized the importance of marketing Center services to employers: "We need to make more people in business aware of the services here. I'm a member of a personnel association that has ninety member companies. The association is currently planning to a hold meeting here. We feel this place is a fantastic, creative, inventive idea. It's really a nice modern facility. For employees coming in, it's great, especially when their self-esteem is low."

None of the respondents indicated awareness of the availability of enhanced services such as customized job training for current employees. When asked if there were any Center services that they thought would be worth paying for, two respondents answered that their companies had their own human resources departments, and, while the Center did some pre-screening of employees, they were still responsible for final screening and interviewing prospective employees. Therefore, they would probably not want to pay for any services.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The New London Center has been influenced by the four federal goals of universality, customer choice, integrating services, and using performance based measures to improve services to customers. Many services that were previously available only to participants in categorically-funded programs are now offered to the general public. At the same time, Center partners have moved from reliance on a handful of service providers for training and education to a more competitive system that allows individuals a much greater choice among providers and gives them the information they need to make informed choices.

In addition to adopting the federal goals, the state has also influenced the development of One-Stop career centers by emphasizing the importance of lifelong learning. In response to this vision, more emphasis is placed on long-term career planning rather than on simply assisting employers and workers to find an immediate job or employee. This vision is seem as particularly important given the massive economic restructuring that has occurred over the last decade in southeastern Connecticut. The lesson learned is that the workforce for the 21st century needs to be resilient and flexible enough to adapt to continuing changes in technology and in the economy.

As one of the first *Connecticut Works* Career Centers, the New London Center has made substantial progress in meeting all of the One-Stop goals specified by the state. Although the process of creating a consolidated workforce development delivery system has at times been contentious, the Center has made clear progress toward the creation of an integrated, accountable, and universal workforce development system. The decision of the New London One-Stop partners to move to a new location has had several very positive effects. The new Center is certainly much more "professional" in atmosphere that the previous Job Center location. The new facility and location also create the potential for further developing on-site services for employers.

Many of the major concerns during first-year implementation have been effectively addressed. These include how to integrate staffing roles and service delivery responsibilities across the partner agencies, how to use performance measures, and how to adopt new user-friendly technologies as tools for providing services and managing programs. Some areas, such as marketing of One-Stop services, especially to employer customers, are still under-developed. Center staff hope that as all of the remaining Connecticut Job Centers become certified as One-Stops, more attention and funding will be devoted to developing effective marketing practices.

The Center offers a rich variety of services and workshops open to all individuals. However, economic pressures may strain the ability of the Center to provide services oriented to career planning, rather than immediate employment, for Center customers. Among these pressures are the need to help large numbers of dislocated workers find reemployment opportunities and the need to address the needs of individuals affected by welfare reform. In combination, these pressures may force the Center to address more limited short-term objectives of moving individuals into immediate jobs as quickly as possible. Thus it is not clear how far *Connecticut Works* Centers, such as the one in New London, will be able to promote the goals of lifelong learning and career development when faced with the prospect of simply finding suitable jobs for many new entrants into the labor force.

New London agency partners and staff are very proud of the changes that have come about as a result of One-Stop implementation. The New London Career Center has been able to leverage funds from a variety of sources to make high-quality services available to all customers. Even though Center staff and managers have experienced difficulties in learning to work with their diverse partners, all agreed that the One-Stop transformation has been beneficial for customers.

APPENDIX C

CONNECTICUT WORKS CAREER CENTER
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During July 1996

CONNECTICUT WORKS CAREER CENTER
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT

One-Stop Profile

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CONNECTICUT WORKS CAREER CENTER WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT

One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Willimantic is a four-square-mile municipal service district adjacent to the larger town of Windham in Connecticut's Windham County. The local area has suffered from a depressed economy since the closure in 1984 of American Thread Mills, a large textile manufacturing firm—which at its height of production employed more than 2,500 in the area. Once known as "thread city," Windham, with a labor force of just under 10,000, was left without a manufacturing or industrial base. Many in the town were convinced that the town would soon see the return of industry, but this has not yet happened.

Willimantic has gradually become the "governmental center" for the largely rural Northeast Connecticut region. Partly in response to diminishing resources for workforce development programs, the local One-Stop system has encouraged the development of a broad partnership. Particularly for a relatively small center, it has also achieved a high degree of co-location of managing and service delivery partners.

As described in the Connecticut state One-Stop profile, the primary emphasis of Connecticut's One-Stop system has been to establish close collaboration between the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL)—the state agency responsible for providing ES and UI services—and Regional Workforce Development Boards, which are responsible for coordinating local education and training policy and administering JTPA and adult education funding. Starting in 1989, a system of Transition Centers—co-administered by the CTDOL and Regional Workforce Development Boards—tested a model for the integrated delivery of career services to dislocated workers. In Willimantic and elsewhere in the state, these centers provided a foundation for the evolution of an integrated One-Stop system.

In the spring of 1994, the Connecticut Legislature passed Public Act 94-116, which provided formal legislative authority for implementing a statewide system of Job Centers focused on the delivery of workforce development services to the general public. Under the One-Stop initiative, these centers—named *Connecticut Works* Centers—are mandated to link the programs administered by the Connecticut Department of Labor, the Regional Workforce Development Boards, and the Department of Economic and Community Development, and are encouraged to involve other public and private education, human services, and employment and training providers in order to deliver coordinated workforce development services to employers and individuals.

Several key variables have influenced the development of the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* Center. These factors include the following:

(1) The area served by the Willimantic center has suffered from a depressed economy and high unemployment rates since the decline of its major manufacturing base in the 1970s.

(2) 25% of the population of Willimantic is Hispanic. Most of the Hispanic population comprise immigrants from Puerto Rico, who came over the last several decades to work in surrounding farms and industries over the last several decades. Many of these individuals have only limited English language fluency and few have participated in public employment and training programs.

(3) Funding for all types of social services has declined in the region, which has made consolidation of efforts through One-Stop an attractive option. As a result, the Willimantic center has succeeded in obtaining on-site participation from a number of local agency partners.

The local vision for the Willimantic One-Stop has changed over time. At first, the Willimantic One-Stop was conceived primarily as a place in which several partners would be co-located. Over time, this has evolved into a vision for creating an integrated service delivery system. Center partners first began by learning as much as they could about services each of the partner agencies provided. Gradually, they found ways to "put the whole equation together" to create more effective service delivery.

As they became more familiar with the work of the various agencies and organizations represented in the center, partners began to realize that many of them provided similar services. As the local One-Stop system has evolved, a major goal has become the elimination of duplication of effort through the consolidation of services. Staff at the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* Center believe that their partnership has been successful partly because the dearth of resources has forced them to be flexible and creative. To achieve their mutual goals, local agencies have had to "pull together" instead of continuing to operate separate and discrete programs.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Governance and Management Structure

Coordination of activities among partners in the Willimantic Career Center dates to the establishment in 1994 of the local "transition center" for dislocated workers. As part of the organization and governance of the transition center, five agencies, including the key partners in the current One-Stop initiative, formed a "regional steering committee" to determine funding and staffing for JTPA dislocated worker programs and services. Through their collaboration in the dislocated worker transition center, these partners developed solid working relations prior to One-Stop implementation. With minor changes, the regional steering committee established for the transition center has evolved into the management team for the local One-Stop system.

Policy oversight and administration of the *Connecticut Works* Career Center system are shared by the Regional Workforce Development Boards (RWDBs) and the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL), through the establishment of local management teams.

Regional Workforce Development Boards are mandated by state legislation to assess human resource development needs in their respective regions, plan for regional employment and training programs, oversee workforce programs and services, and coordinate a broad range of employment, education, training, and related services. Boards also administer funds for JTPA Title II and Title III services and adult education funds.[1] Regional Boards are also responsible for approving the annual service plans prepared by each of the *Connecticut Works* Centers in their region. After approval by the RWDB chair and the appropriate chief elected official, Career Center plans are forwarded to the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission—a statewide policy board—for approval.

The Local Management Team established to oversee the operation of two planned *Connecticut Works* Centers in the Northeast Connecticut region includes three voting members and three advisory (non-voting) members. Voting members, also referred to as the "executive committee" of the local management team, include the following:

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[1] Most Regional Workforce Development Boards in Connecticut are moving away from providing JTPA services directly. In keeping with this trend, the Northeast Connecticut RWDB oversees and administers third-party service providers for delivery of most JTPA services.

- The executive director of the Northeast Regional Workforce Development Board, called Workforce One.
- The ES/UI director of the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* Center, which was already certified as by the state as a One-Stop career center at the time of the evaluation site visit.
- The ES/UI director of the Danielson Job Center, which had not yet been certified at the time of the evaluation site visit.

To preserve equal representation between the CTDOL and the Regional Board, the Board representative has one vote and each of the CTDOL ES/UI representatives have one-half vote.

According to the local by-laws governing the Willimantic One-Stop, all entities that are contracted service providers for workforce development programs are excluded from participating as voting members of the executive committee, even if they are public agencies.[2] Representatives of two such agencies serve in an advisory capacity as non-voting members of the Local Management Team. These are:

- The president of the Quinebaug Valley Community Technical College, or her appointed representative. The college's president is also a member of the Regional Workforce Development Board.
- The executive director of the ACCESS Agency, a Community Action Program.

A third non-voting member of the Local Management Team is the field manager of the Department of Social Services.

The Local Management Team has two major functions: (1) making financial and cost allocation decisions related to center operations and (2) establishing local One-Stop policies and priorities. Financial decisions are generally discussed at meetings of the three voting partners. Among the budget issues discussed at these meetings are shared equipment purchases, allocation of staff time and costs across different funding streams, and joint marketing efforts. During the early phase of One-Stop implementation, these meetings were held several times a month and tended to be fairly long because there were many cost allocation issues that needed to be discussed. After One-Stop operations stabilized, management team meetings were held monthly and were fairly brief. In addition to these formal meetings, the two CTDOL ES/UI directors and the RWDB director have frequent telephone conversations.

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[2] According to state regulations, only for-profit entities must be excluded from local governance teams.

The full Local Management Team (including non-voting partners) meets about every quarter. These meetings tend to be focused on broader local policy discussions such as inter-agency service integration and providing "seamless services" to present and potential One-Stop customers. The three non-voting members of the management team provide substantial input into the design and delivery of local One-Stop services.

Agencies Involved in the One-Stop Initiative

The agencies with an on-site presence at the Willimantic center include the following:

- *The Connecticut Department of Labor*, whose 16 staff at the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* Center provide services funded by the ES, UI, and Veterans Employment and Training programs. All CTDOL staff in Willimantic are located at this One-Stop center.
- *Workforce One*, Regional Workforce Development Board for Northeast Connecticut. The main offices of the Board are in the nearby town of Chaplin. One Board staff provides Title IIA and IIC intake at the center twice weekly.
- *Quinebaug Valley Community Technical College* is an important off-site local provider of education and training services to One-Stop. Using funding from an EDWAA grant, the center also employs two interns from the college to staff the center's career resource library. The college, whose main campus is in Killingly, has two locations in the region, one of which is a large annex located within the same wing of the Tyler square shopping mall as the career center.
- *Windham Regional Community Council* (WRCC) provides services under contracts with DSS and Regional Workforce Development Board for services to JTPA-eligible youth and adults and JOBS-eligible individuals. Services provided by the one on-site staff person and another staff person in WRCC's main offices in Willimantic include administration of on-the-job training services and the provision of assessment, training referral, and case management services. In providing these services, Council staff work with CTDOL ES Career Development specialists and JTPA intake staff to identify customers who may be eligible for the available services. Council staff working in the Willimantic center's career services and community services units

also coordinate employer outreach efforts. One Council staff provides employment services for 16 to 21 year-old youths, and, although they had not yet begun to do so at the time of the site visit, these staff were planning to provide specialized on-site job search workshops for youth.

- *Eastern Connecticut Regional Education Service Center* (EASTCONN) is a non-profit educational organization created by local education agencies from 36 municipalities throughout eastern Connecticut. Under contract to the Regional Workforce Development Board, EASTCONN houses three staff at the Willimantic center to serve customers eligible for JTPA and Older Worker programs. The services provided by EASTCONN staff at the Willimantic center include assessment for dislocated workers and assessment and counseling for JTPA Title IIA and IIC participants. EASTCONN staff also develop all center-wide assessment materials and train other case worker and counseling staff in the use of these materials. They also supply the office with brochures on adult and community education opportunities within the region.
- *Green Thumb* has one on-site representative who provides job search assistance to limited-income individuals 55 years old and over.

Important off-site partners that coordinate closely with the One-Stop also include:

- The Willimantic Office of the *Department of Social Services*. Although there were no contractual or financial agreements, DSS has arranged for CTDOL staff to provide regularly scheduled orientation sessions at the One-Stop center on the employment-related services available to customers receiving welfare. At the time of the evaluation visit, there were plans to provide DSS staff with space for out-stationed staff and access to the *Connecticut Works* database. DSS case workers refer their clients to relevant services available at the Center.

  Examples of center services to which DSS staff might refer their clients include Project HIRE (JOBS) provided by the Windham Regional Community Council, JTPA Titles IIA and IIC services provided by EASTCONN and the Windham Regional Community Council, and education referrals and services provided with education set-aside funds to prepare individuals with the basic skills they need to enter occupational skills training or education programs.[3]

  Since the evaluation visit, Connecticut legislation has mandated that CTDOL Job Centers provide the work-search portion of welfare-to-work services. This has not had any immediate impact on service delivery at the center. The Community Council and the ACCESS agency (see below) continue to offer workshops for welfare customers at their own facilities, and Council staff facilitate an on-site job club geared toward welfare recipients in the conference rooms of the career center as part of their contract with DSS.

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[3] Education set-aside services available through the Coordinated Education and Training Opportunities (CETO) program are operated at the Willimantic center by EASTCONN.

- *ACCESS Agency, Inc.* is a comprehensive education, employment and training, and social service agency serving the Windham and Tolland areas of northeastern Connecticut. Located in a large office directly across the street from the One-Stop, ACCESS is co-located with HealthFirst, a community health center created as an ACCESS initiative. ACCESS representatives participate on the interagency One-Stop team that plans and schedules workshops for center customers.

  Since the evaluation site visit, ACCESS has entered into contractual relations as a full One-Stop partner agency. At the time of the site visit, ACCESS was beginning a performance-based contract with the state's Department of Social Services to place 190 AFDC recipients into employment. ACCESS also provides a number of educational and support services such as the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program, bilingual English-Spanish public service announcements, and Head Start.

  In alliance with the Regional Workforce Development Board, the Technical College, and other partners, ACCESS had just completed the first year of operation of a "Northeast Connecticut Entrepreneur Center," using federal DOL funding. The Entrepreneur Center offers an eight-week course three times per year to teach prospective business owners the skills necessary to operate their own business, including marketing, accounting, and elementary tax law.

The center also maintains referral linkages with the Willimantic offices of the Bureau of Rehabilitation. Most often, customers receiving vocational rehabilitation services are referred to the One-Stop center for assessment services. Most of these customers receive job placement services directly from the Bureau, although these services are also available to these customers at the One-Stop center. There are as yet no coordinated school-to-career activities in the Willimantic area.

Legislative/Organizational Initiatives to Support the Local One-Stop Vision and System

In 1989, the Connecticut legislature established the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC), whose mandate was to plan for the coordination of existing employment and training programs. In 1992, the Connecticut General Assembly passed Public Act 92-145, which authorized the establishment of Regional Workforce Development Boards in each of the nine SDAs in the state. All Boards were mandated to have a majority of private sector representatives; the Board Chair must be from the private sector. This legislation, together with subsequent legislation (Public Act 93-134), defined the following functions for RWDBs: (1) assessment of regional needs and priorities for employment and training programs; (2) planning and coordination of these programs and preparation of an annual workforce development plan; (3) review of grant proposals and plans submitted to state agencies for employment and training programs that directly affect the region.

There were no special local legislative or organizational initiatives supporting the Willimantic One-Stop at the time of the site visit. However, the Regional Workforce Board was working with the local Council of Governments to explore more effective ways to involve chief elected officials in planning for integrated education, training, and employment in the Willimantic area. In particular, the Board is trying to involve local elected officials in workforce planning, following a model developed in the area served by the neighboring Danielson center.[4]

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Partners in the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* Career Center have developed several communication mechanisms at the local level to coordinate their system-building efforts. In addition to the local management team, there are a number of committees and "work teams" that are composed of local front-line partner staff. These teams meet to share ideas on ways to improve the integration and delivery of services to customers. Although the Center director provides general guidance and goals, front-line staff and supervisors coordinate the activities of these teams. Active teams at the time of the site visit included the following:

- *Workshop Committee.* This team meets once a month to decide on what workshops will be offered to center customers and to coordinate the scheduling of these workshops. All of the agencies with an on-site presence at the Center participate in these meetings.

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[4] In the area served by the neighboring Danielson CTDOL Center, 12 local elected officials have formed an economic alliance called the "New Coalition" that is developing a regional development plan with attention to employment and training needs.

- *Assessment Work Group.* This team of counselors from various agencies was formed to coordinate assessment methods and to discuss the appropriate assessment tools for Center customers.
- *Marketing Committee.* A team comprised of staff from three of the One-Stop partner agencies (CTDOL, the RWDB, and the Windham Regional Community Council, which provides JTPA services) has been formed to promote local marketing efforts. The thrust of marketing efforts is to promote the idea that the *Connecticut Works* offices are not just unemployment offices, but that a much wider range of partners and services are available. In particular, the committee is focusing on getting broader radio coverage. The committee, together with management staff, was also preparing for a "Grand Opening" of the Center scheduled for October 1996. This event, intended to publicize Center services, was expected to draw a large number of local political and community representatives.

In addition to participating on the management team, the center director also represents workforce development partners in meetings of the Windham regional municipal managers, who meet regularly to discuss issues of coordinating a variety of public services including workforce development and social services.

To support ongoing One-Stop operations, the state-level *Connecticut Works* office provides centers with regular updates on One-Stop policy and implementation issues. To promote communication among state and regional staff, the *Connecticut Works* Office also sponsors quarterly management team meetings involving state *Connecticut Works* staff, CTDOL Job Center directors, and Workforce Development Boards directors.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

A total of $178,000 was allocated for the Danielson/Willimantic SDA from the state's first and second year DOL One-Stop implementation grants to support system transformation in the Danielson/Willimantic area.[5] The Regional Workforce Development Board was the principal grant administrator, responsible for $143,000 in implementation grant funds. The regional office of the Connecticut Department of Labor received the remainder of the grant. State allocations to One-Stop regions were intended to address regional needs to develop the capacity to provide self-service opportunities for One-Stop customers and support other changes needed to transition to a One-Stop system, such as office design. Although grants to cover personnel costs were allowed, only those costs directly related to new functions brought about by the transition to One-Stop were approved.

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[5] Approximately $55,000 of this amount was allocated to facilitate the transformation of the Danielson Job Center into a One-Stop career center. The remaining $123,000 was allocated to the Willimantic One-Stop.

The regional office of the Connecticut Department of Labor used its $35,000 in implementation grant funds to defray the costs of relocating Board staff to the One-Stop center; purchasing equipment such as personal computers, workstations for visiting partner organizations and kiosks, and installing a new telephone network to accommodate computer links and additional staff. The RWDB used its portion of the One-Stop implementation grant:

- To develop the infrastructure to connect the Regional Workforce Development Board to the CTDOL information network;
- To help pay for technical services provided by outside contractors;
- To help pay for the salaries and benefits of RWDB personnel providing services to the general public, including assisting customers in the Career Services Center, helping to conduct intake, providing career counseling, and helping customers prepare resumes.

Formal cost allocation agreements have been established between the Regional Board and CTDOL concerning shared costs of equipment, and expansion of the telephone and telecommunications network and certain recurring costs associated with universal services (e.g., phone bank toll charges). At the present time, CTDOL pays all lease costs at the center. A portion of One-Stop implementation funds granted to CTDOL—approximately $28,000 per annum—are used to defray the cost of providing space for partnering staff.

CTDOL and the Regional Board also entered into non-financial interagency agreements with the Windham Regional Community Council, the Department of Social Services and the ACCESS agency. These agreements specify respective roles and responsibilities of these agencies and their staff. Specific formal non-financial agreements include the following:

- *CTDOL* is responsible for:
  - providing work areas for partner staff;
  - providing training in the use of Job Bank and labor market information;

  - accepting referrals from partner agencies and providing placement services for their customers;
  - providing staff for monthly case management meetings;
  - providing a community service work area on a scheduled basis for additional partner staff;
  - providing special center orientations for referred customers (in the agreement with DSS only).
- The *Regional Board* is responsible for:
  - providing direct referral of customers for JTPA and Older Worker services to partnering agencies, and for coordinating appointments with partner staff; and
  - facilitating monthly case management meetings of all partner staff.
- *EASTCONN* is responsible for:
  - out-stationing staff for case management and customer activities for JTPA Title IIA, 5% Older Worker, and JTPA Title III programs;
  - developing the assessment component for case managers and providing training to other partner staff in its use;
  - participating in monthly case management meetings;
  - providing Adult Education staff on-site during registration periods as appropriate; and
  - providing brochures on Adult and Community Education offerings.
- *Windham Regional Community Council* is responsible for
  - providing staff to coordinate employer outreach efforts with CTDOL and the Board;
  - providing assessment, training referral, and case management services for JTPA Title IIC customers;
  - participating in monthly case management meetings;
  - planning specialized services for youth including possible job workshops;
  - providing information on other (off-site) Council services; and
  - working with the career development unit and JTPA caseworkers to identify customers who have the potential for on-the-job training.

- Although co-location has not yet taken place, formal agreements have been made with the *Department of Social Services* which is responsible for:
    - referring appropriate customers for program services offered at the center including Project Hire (JOBS), JTPA Titles IIA and IIC, CETO, and Job Services;
    - when appropriate, out-stationing DSS staff to provide eligibility determination; and
    - providing job leads for entry into the *Connecticut Works* Job Bank.

There are no current plans to develop fee-for-service arrangements with employers or job-seekers.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

In 1994, partners in what is now known as the *Connecticut Works* Center, cooperated in establishing a Transition Center for dislocated workers at the existing Willimantic Job Center. Transition centers consolidated employment and re-training services in a convenient location from which individuals could conduct self-directed job searches. These customers had access to free use of telephones and faxes for local and long-distance use, copy machines, assistance in writing and printing cover letters and resumes, free mailing, and access to a reference library which included books, newspapers, and other written reference materials. Job seekers also had access to professional support from trained staff, and access to group workshops and peer support activities.

The Willimantic Transition Center thus represented an early collaboration among several local partners. Local staff regard their experiences in reaching across agency lines to provide coordinated services as an important step in their progress toward providing integrated career services to a universal population. Although transition centers were originally conceived as a response to assist targeted populations, they provided an important bridge to providing a variety of job search and support services to the general population. By the time the Willimantic Center was certified as a One-Stop center and moved to its present location within the same shopping mall in March 1996, partner agencies had been working closely together for over a year.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

The Willimantic *Connecticut Works* Center has made substantial progress toward the four federal One-Stop goals of providing universal access to services, making a range of service options available to customers, integrating services, and developing a system in which information is used to promote the continuous improvement of services. The following sections are intended to provide are brief overview of the center's approach to these federal themes.

Universal Access

Services available to the general public were greatly expanded as a result of One-Stop implementation and parallel local and state initiatives. Center partners built on their experiences in providing high-quality customer services for dislocated workers in the Transition Center that was established at the Willimantic Job Center before One-Stop implementation. There has also been a conscious move away from a "government facility" or "unemployment office" feeling, in which clients showed up every two weeks to wait in line for their checks—or in the words of one long-time employee, a place where "nobody in their right mind would actually *want* to come"—to a place where all people can come to get a variety of information. The important difference under One-Stop is that many services that were previously reserved for participants of categorically funded programs are now available to the general public. Services available to all customers include group workshops, one-on-one assistance with resume preparation, as well as access to the phone bank, fax machines, and copiers. As part of its universal services, the Willimantic Center offers customers a range of levels of staff support.

All customers are invited to receive a group orientation to the One-Stop Center that covers the goals of the *Connecticut Works* system. The orientation also provides customers with an overview of the education, training, employment, and support services that are either available at the Center or through referral to other organizations. Group workshops are an important element of the Center's universal services. All customers may attend job search and career workshops, provided by center staff, that cover the important steps in a successful job search. Topics discussed include resume preparation, networking, targeting employers, and preparing for the job interview.

Services available to all job seekers also include a range of services that can be accessed on a self-service basis. For example, job seekers have access to a Resource

Library as well as a phone bank. Customers may use Talent Bank software to produce formatted hard-copy resumes as well as post electronic versions that are available to employers through the Internet.

Customer Choice

The Connecticut vision for One-Stop emphasizes that effective customer choice begins by providing customers the information they need to make informed choices about career possibilities. In line with this vision for One-Stop, center staff and management emphasize the importance of dealing with the "whole person" through career planning services as opposed to only help with finding a job. Both staff and individuals interviewed in focus groups noted a major differences in terms of the variety of services available, and the ability of customers to choose those services that they wanted including: direct access to job listings, workshops, and career services such as assistance with finding information on employers and developing resumes.

Customers can also access a variety of information from off-site. Examples include toll-free access via modem to the Public Access Labor Market Information System (PALIS) bulletin boards. Customers with Internet service can also access a variety of services via CTDOL's World Wide Web site. One such service is America's Talent Bank, which allows Internet users to compose and post resumes from off-site locations. Customers are also able to enroll for unemployment benefits either in person at the Center, or by telephone to a regional center.

Counselors will schedule appointments with anybody requesting this service, regardless of the person's eligibility for program funding, to discuss career planning or job search needs and objectives and to discuss educational and training alternatives.

At present, the center does not offer extended hours of operation during evenings or weekends.

Integrated Services

Center staff work in a number of units; many of which are staffed entirely or primarily by CTDOL employees. These include a *basic services* unit that processes unemployment claims and assists individuals with the job search; an *employment planning* unit that assists dislocated and profiled workers and provides counseling in career decision making and career development. Audit, adjudication, business services, and office support staff are also entirely staffed by CTDOL.

The *career services* unit, on the other hand, is fully integrated across partner staff. For example, career services staff from four on-site partner agencies—CTDOL, EASTCONN, Windham Regional Community Council, and the Regional Workforce Board—provide assessment, classroom training, on-the-job training and job search assistance for dislocated workers. Caseloads are divided among the staff of each agency during monthly case management meetings. Other aspects of career services are also staffed by agencies with particular specialization. For example, two administrative assistants, working as interns for the community-technical college assist customers in the resource library; one Board staff person provides intake for JTPA Title II customers and staff from EASTCONN provide Title II customers with assessment and counseling services; and staff from Windham Regional Community Council provide employment services for youth.

With the exception of specialized workshops—such as those offered by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) on topics related to older workers or workshops offered through the state's office for higher education on opportunities and financial aid in higher education—all workshops are designed and conducted by full time staff of the One-Stop partner agencies.

Because the Willimantic center is relatively small, unlike all the larger *Connecticut Works* centers, there is no greeter position; rather there is an intake desk staffed by a person with knowledge of the range of services offered at the center.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

As in all of Connecticut's One-Stops, staff have access to quarterly reviews based on a standardized set of core measures developed by CTDOL's Performance Measurement Unit. These measures, designed to offer a balanced picture of Center performance, provide staff with information that allows them to compare outcomes for their customers with those for other offices in the state and to identify areas in which services can be improved. Some of these performance measures include: indices of overall individual and employer customer satisfaction, entered employment rates, and the average time it takes customers receive services or benefits (see Connecticut state profile for a complete list of performance measures).

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Physical Facilities

Since 1990, the Connecticut Department of Labor has had its Willimantic Job Center offices in Tyler Square, a modern and attractive strip mall located about one mile from central Willimantic. With the opening of the *Connecticut Works* center in 1996, partner agencies moved into a larger facility in a wing of the mall that is also occupied by an annex "campus" of the local community-technical college. As the customer enters, she sees an information/intake desk in front, and a kiosks area that provides access to the state's Job Bank. The back part of the facilities are occupied by training rooms and the left portion of the building houses a career development center, with a library, phone bank, several personal computers, a fax machine, and a customer mail area, where customers can receive postage and assistance preparing and sending resumes and cover letters. The central area of the office is divided into office cubicles for partner staff. Counselor cubicles are located in a private area on the right side of the center.

Staffing Arrangements

At the time of the site visit there were 23 staff members at the Willimantic center. The majority of the staff—16 persons—were CTDOL employees, with the remaining 7 staff coming from the remaining on-site partners. Staff were assigned to one of nine functional units:

- *Basic Services* is staffed entirely by CTDOL employees. The unit processes unemployment claims and provides job search assistance. One Veterans Employment Services representative, also a CTDOL employee, works in this unit.
- *Employment Planning,* which is also staffed by CT DOL, has a unit supervisor, who offers services to profiled dislocated workers, and two career development specialists who assist all One-Stop customers with career decision-making, job referrals, and other placement services.
- *Career Services,* coordinated by a CTDOL employee, is cross-staffed by all key participating partners. This unit provides services to dislocated workers, economically disadvantaged workers, and the general public. Services include workshops and access to a career services library. This unit is divided by the following service categories:
    - *Services to Dislocated Workers.* Assessment is provided by a staff from multiple agencies, including a specialist from the local educational consortium (EASTCONN), a Senior Employment Counselor and JTPA-funded staff from the Regional Workforce

Development Board, staff from the JTPA contractor (Windham Regional Community Council) and two administrative assistants from the community technical college.

  - *Services to JTPA IIA Customers.* Services include assessment, referral to classroom training, administration of on-the-job training, and job search assistance for individuals who have limited skills and limited income. Staff include an assessment specialist (EASTCONN), three counselors including a bilingual counselor (EASTCONN), and a JTPA intake worker, employed by RWDB.

  - *Employment Services for Youth (16-21).* Two youth employment counselors from the Windham Regional Community Council provide employment-related services to economically disadvantaged youth using funds from JTPA Title IIB and C.

- *Adjudication.* Staff employed by the CTDOL determine eligibility for unemployment benefits. Unit staff include a coordinator and two adjudication specialists.

- *Field Audit.* One CTDOL field auditor assigned to this unit ensures employer compliance with UI tax law.

- *Business Services.* One CTDOL business services consultant provides assistance on apprenticeship, customized job training and special services to employers.

- *Community Services.*

  - *Green Thumb Program* has one representative conducting job search assistance for individuals 55 years old and over who have limited income.

  - *Department of Social Services "Project Hire."* Under a separate contract with the Department of Social Services, the Windham Regional Community Center employs a JOBS program manager and one job developer to provide job search assistance to AFDC recipients.

Capacity Building

Willimantic staff have benefited from several state-level efforts initiated through CTDOL's staff development unit (SDU). Prior to the opening of the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* center in 1996, for example, SDU offered an orientation training for current and potential partner staff on the One-Stop vision and philosophy. Other state-sponsored training sessions have included modules on dealing with working in a changed work environment, different organization styles, and a variety of personality types and motivational styles.

Local partners have also conducted their own training. EASTCONN, for example, conducted a training on group facilitation skills for EDWAA participants, and was planning to conduct similar sessions for partner staff working with other populations. Other training has involved staff-led sessions that explain the various programmatic reporting requirements; sessions led by the regional director of the Department of Social Services on impending welfare reforms, and informal presentations by various partner staff during whole-office monthly staff meetings on their service delivery philosophies and strategies.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

During the early development of the Willimantic center, one of the major problems was that the various partners offering JTPA services had a different system for case management and reporting. Since the evaluation visit, information management systems have been completely integrated across partner staff, using the state's mainframe system. Although the system is less user-friendly than PC-based systems, all partners input the same information and confidentiality (e.g., access to UI wage data) is insured through the use of passwords. Unlike the IMS system used by JTPA partners, the state's mainframe system does not have case management capabilities and all case notes are kept in paper files.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology

The Willimantic One-Stop has benefited from state's emphasis on providing readily accessible and easily understandable labor market information as part of self-service options at One-Stops. For several years, the state has maintained a bulletin board service for job seekers, which is accessible toll-free throughout the state by modem. In 1996, CTDOL also began offering access to a variety of information through its Internet World Wide Web site. Through the state's Internet home page, job seekers can access information on state and national Job Banks, get tips on their job search, post their resumes on America's Talent Bank, find information on unemployment compensation, review labor market trends, and find out which career areas are in greatest demand in the state. Students can also access an "LMI for Students" Web site that suggests how to select a career path and describes the types of attributes that employers value most in their workers. Businesses can post job openings electronically and review Talent Bank resumes. They can also obtain a variety of information on OSHA and ADA compliance as well as on wage and workplace standards.

According to local respondents, many of these technological improvements have been very well received, particularly by individual customers. Customers and staff alike have been pleased with the Talent Bank and its ability to generate high quality resumes. Although a great deal of labor market information is now available, some staff indicated that despite some state training efforts, labor market information requires substantial interpretation and is not widely used by individual customers. Rather, labor market information is generally viewed as a useful tool for counselors who can use the data to determine local labor conditions and to identify growing sectors within the economy.

Marketing

Marketing activities were seen as largely the responsibility of the state. Much of the state's recent marketing activity has centered on making information available to the public through its well-developed Internet website which has links to state and national Job Banks and the Talent Bank which is being piloted state-wide in Connecticut. The state has also produced a brochure available at the Willimantic center describing the *Connecticut Works* vision and services available at local centers.

Local partners, including the Job Center Director and the Board's Executive Director, have also appeared in radio broadcasts explaining the services that are available at the Willimantic center. As a free public service, the local newspaper also publishes a monthly calendar of events, including group workshops, offered at the center. The center was also planning to run paid newspaper advertisements.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

Unlike larger *Connecticut Works* offices that have a specialized "greeter" position, because the Willimantic office is quite small, there is no need (or space) for a greeter. As a customer enters, she comes to a customer service desk that is within several feet of the front door. The person staffing the desk, who is generally from the Basic Services Unit (described above), asks if the customer has an appointment. If so, she is then referred directly to the appropriate staff person. If the person does not have an appointment, the customer service staffer asks about the reason for the visit. The customer service desk has a computer terminal, so if a person has a question about filing for unemployment insurance, for example, the staff person can do a preliminary check of the person's eligibility by entering her name or social security number.

Depending on the customer's needs, she will be directed to the self-service area or kiosks, or if she would like to register for unemployment benefits or dislocated worker services, she is referred to a worker in the Basic Services Unit who can determine eligibility for JTPA Title III services, open a file for a UI claim, and conduct UI profiling. Basic Services staff will also conduct an initial screening for job services. Customers may also be referred to a counselor in the Employment Planning Unit who can refer them to support services and can also assist them with referrals and placement with employers. JTPA Title II intake is conducted by a Regional Workforce Board staff person who comes to the center twice a week. These services are conducted primarily by EASTCONN staff.

The Willimantic Career Center, like all *Connecticut Works* Centers, uses an "inverted pyramid" service delivery system. Under this service delivery concept, most individuals receive largely self-directed job search and career development, a smaller number of people participate in group activities, and the fewest number of individuals receive one-on-one counseling or intensive education and training services. Self-access and group services are essential elements of the system, in order to achieve universal access and maximize customer choice. At the same time, staff time is freed up, so that staff can spend more time with those customers with special needs.

Core Services. "Core services" at the Willimantic Center are available to the general public at no cost. Core services include all of the self- services at the Center, including access to labor market information, reference materials, and job listings. Self service areas are located in two places in the Center. To one side of the public entry, there is a small Job Bank area where individuals can access electronic job listings. Most of the other self-service offerings can be accessed in the Career Development Center, a larger area on the other side of the One-Stop facility. The Career Center is staffed by "resource persons" from CTDOL, Windham Regional Community Council and interns from Quinebaug Valley Community-Technical College. These staff help customers find information on jobs, careers, and education and training providers. Materials available in the Resource Library, which is located in the Career Center, include the following:

- Reference materials on companies;

- Materials on resume writing and job search strategies;
- Newspapers and trade magazines containing job listings.

The following self-access or guided services are also available to the general public in the Career Service Center:

- Use of personal computers in the Career Services Center;
- Access to free fax machines for contacting employers;
- Access to the telephone bank for contacting employers;
- Assistance with writing resumes and cover letters;
- Assistance using the Talent Bank;
- On-line and printed labor market information;
- Information on scholarships and career training; and
- Information on and referrals to other community resources.

In addition to the self-service options described above, a variety of group activities and workshops are available to all Center customers. All job seekers are invited or required to attend a regularly scheduled orientation session which takes approximately forty-five to fifty minutes. Staff provide information about the range of services available, and special activities that are scheduled for the month. All customers who have attended an orientation session can attend a variety of on-site workshops at the Center. Workshops and seminars offered at the Center to the general public include:

- *Managing Change*. This seminar is primarily designed to assist persons deal with changes associated with job loss. Seminars emphasize various aspects of financial planning.
- *Discovering Future Employment Goals*.
- *Resume Writing*. This workshop addresses the various forms of resumes (e.g., chronological, functional) and techniques of effective resume writing. Those persons who are not clear on their job objectives are encouraged to first meet with a Career Development Specialist or to attend the *Discovering Future Employment Goals* Workshop.
- *Follow-up Resume Seminar*. This seminar is intended to review the first draft of the resume and leads to a completed resume.
- *Job Leads*. The objective of the workshop is to help customers find alternative ways to find jobs leads, and emphasizes the "hidden job market" and finding job openings before they are publicized.

- Mini-resumes. Workshops participants learn to prepare mini-resumes modeled on the proprietary "Jist" card. These 3 x 5 cards contain a compressed version of the job seeker's skills and experiences that can be given to potential employers or used as interview "scripts." All workshop attendees must have a completed resume before attending.
- *Dialing for Dollars*. This workshop teaches the various techniques involved with contacting employers by telephone. It is intended to help job seekers overcome "phone fear," reach those persons with the authority to hire, and set up interviews.
- *Interviewing Techniques*. Customers learn the elements of effective job interviewing. The workshop offers tips on how to answer common interview questions, and learning how to "sell" oneself on the job market.
- *Education and Employment Workshop.* Offered on a monthly basis by the State Department of Education (SDE), this workshop focuses mainly on financial aid opportunities for individual seeking further education.
- *Surviving the Workplace*. Designed primarily for workers with little or no job experience, this workshops offers tip on keeping a job. Facilitators describe the qualities that employers seek in their workers, and how to deal with the stresses that new employees might encounter at the workplace.
- *Workshop for Older Workers*. Offered by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), this workshops deals with various facets of the job search and overcoming age barriers.

Education and training services available to customers at the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* Center include the following:

- Basic Skills, English as a Second Language (ESL), General Equivalency Diploma (GED), External High School Diploma services are available by referral to Adult Education.
- Entrepreneurial Seminars are currently offered at the Center.
- Technical and Occupational Skills. Individual Enrollment Training is available for JTPA-eligible customers.
- Classroom Training.
- Certificate Programs.
- On-the-job-training is accessible to eligible customers from an on-site service provider.

Services for Employer Customers

Under the previous system, Willimantic described a situation in which employers were "bombarded by different agencies" advocating for one individual. Partners now approach job development as a coordinated effort. For example, the Windham Regional Community Council's JTPA job placement staff at the center coordinate employer outreach efforts with CTDOL's Business Services Unit and the Regional Workforce Development Board staff. In addition, since the evaluation visit, several staff from the State Department of Community and Economic Development have co-located at the center to provide services to employers through a consolidated Business Services Unit.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

The majority of the nine customers interviewed in a focus group had received dislocated worker services. Nearly unanimously, they expressed a high level of appreciation for the services they received and for the caring attitude of the center's staff. One respondent emphasized the fact that the staff "felt like family" and was "always available to her," and this comment received many nods of agreement. Another customer who lost her job of 25 years due to a large-scale downsizing said, "It was unbelievable coming in here. I was amazed by all the help available. They're so friendly and make you feel like you're really a valuable human being. They really care about building your self-esteem."

Satisfaction was especially high among customers who had previous experience with the "unemployment office." One respondent in particular, had been laid off several times, and had collected unemployment insurance at various times since 1980. He characterized his experiences as follows:

> On my first trips to the unemployment office staff were impolite, rude, terse, and acting like they were doing you a favor. I noticed a difference starting in about 1990. This experience was much nicer than before, but I still wouldn't call their attitude like family. Things really started changing here around mid-1995. I came back here about five years later, in May 1995. The people at the desk were nicer. Dealing with the staff felt really felt tremendous.
>
> What a difference a few years make! I attended workshops on resume writing. There were now individual appointments. They helped me dissect my resume,

> and made a lot of suggestions about how I could get back into teaching. The people here taught me about writing a functional resume. This works much better for someone like me—a chronological resume doesn't look so good for someone who has been unemployed as much as I have. I've sent out 100 letters and gotten 10 responses back. . .
>
> The people here have been really been working to change the image of CTDOL. People here have a whole different attitude than before. I don't feel intimidated now. Before, I just wanted to get in and out as quickly as possible. Now I feel the staff are really working together—they all really *want* to get you a job. That's a really big difference.

Only one customer offered any critical comments. She maintained that the center did not do enough to meet her needs as a parent. According to this person:

> I have two issues about this process. I have to be with my daughter while I'm looking for work. I need to find child care, but I find myself in a confrontational loop. The Career Center needs to be more "family-friendly." There's no allocation for child care. That would really be compassionate and caring. It'd also be nice if we could have a coffee pot available, so we could drink coffee when we came in.

Employers

Center staff were unable to schedule a focus group with employers.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The experiences of the Willimantic center suggest that a profound change in the philosophy of delivering employment and training services is underway. Staff and individual customers that had experience with the former system suggest that enormous improvements have occurred, first as a result of a statewide reorganization of service delivery and the One-Stop initiative that occurred shortly thereafter. Staff and customers described the former system as "rule-based" and "lock-step." Several individuals remarked on how unfriendly staff in the old CTDOL offices were, and contrasted these attitudes toward the customer-oriented attitudes that they had encountered more recently, particularly in the period after One-Stop implementation.

Similarly, according to local staff, One-Stop implementation has produced important changes in their attitude toward customers, who they now view, in the words of one key respondent as "whole persons" rather than as a "client" of particular programs. According to this person, the Willimantic *Connecticut Works* is no longer the "doom spot" that the old CTDOL office used to be: "Customers feel good about coming in here now. They view it as a place to develop their resume and do research on employment and training opportunities." Staff morale has also risen greatly as a result of the changes prompted under One-Stop implementation. "Before you could only tell a person they were not eligible for services," said one staffer. "Now we can present them with an entire range of offerings that are open to the public."

The Willimantic center does however face some substantial challenges. Because One-Stop funding was used to support many of the universal services offered—such as phone banks, faxes, mailing, updating materials in the resource room, and some of the group workshops—it is unclear the extent to which the center will be able to support all of these activities once the One-Stop implementation period is finished. This is particularly important in terms of the availability of workshops, many of which are usually full. Despite these problems, most staff were enthusiastic in their response to One-Stop implementation, which they view as having validated their new customer-oriented approach.

APPENDIX D

STATE OF INDIANA

One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During July 1996

STATE OF INDIANA
One-Stop Profile

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STATE OF INDIANA

One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The state of Indiana began preparing for a transition to integrated workforce development services during the mid-1980s. At that time, more than 17 state agencies were providing—with little coordination—a wide range of employment- and training-related services. Over the last ten years, a sequence of planning forums, local pilot projects, and statewide restructuring initiatives has brought substantial progress in reducing duplication of effort and implementing a coordinated approach, at least among the three major programs—ES, UI, and JTPA. The most recent efforts, conducted as part of the federal One-Stop initiative, are designed to enhance partnerships with additional agencies and programs and to further actual integration of staffing and service delivery among state and local workforce development partners.

In sharp contrast to the economic woes it experienced during the early and mid-1980s, Indiana's current economic context is generally healthy, with an unemployment rate of between 3.5% and 5%. However, in the larger urban areas, pockets of high unemployment persist. Although unemployment is generally low, many of the manufacturing jobs lost over the last decade and a half have been replaced by generally lower-paying jobs in the service and retail sectors. Employers complain that the state is already experiencing the scenario projected in the federal "Workforce 2000" report: there are fewer new entrants into the workforce and these individuals do not possess the basic skills needed to undertake entry-level jobs in the new high technology economy.

A number of variables have influenced Indiana's efforts to move forward in its One-Stop system development. These include (1) frequent governmental reorganizations at the state level and (2) declines in federal funding for workforce development programs and discussions about the advantages and disadvantages of privatization of One-Stop service delivery at the local level. Additionally, difficulties in developing close ties with the welfare and education systems have made it difficult to broaden the base of the coordinating partners beyond the DOL-mandated programs. Each of these factors is briefly described below.

- *High state officials, including the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, have supported the state's past efforts to consolidate workforce* *development programs and the state has generally been an active force in promoting system change.* However, frequent turnover of the commissioners responsible for workforce development programs has made it difficult at times for the state to provide clear policy guidance to local practitioners. In addition, at the time of the site visit, a number of respondents were concerned about whether the state government would encourage the privatization of some workforce development services—a position favored by one of the unsuccessful gubernatorial candidates. The direction for future state One-Stop policies is expected to become clear once the new governor begins revealing his policy goals. Privatization is not currently under active consideration by the state.

- *Federal block granting of workforce development and welfare programs is perceived as a mixed blessing by both state and local respondents; they fear that the consolidation of programs will blur the fact that less money is available overall to respond to workforce development issues.* For example, the reorganization of the state Department of Workforce Development in 1995 also included a hiring freeze that eliminated more than 100 positions at the state level primarily through staff attrition. State and local staff are generally enthusiastic about the service designs associated with One-Stop systems, but they are wary of pressures to "work smarter with fewer employees," and fearful of increased workloads and changed job responsibilities with no corresponding changes in wage scales.
- *Consolidation of workforce development agencies at the state level has set the organizational stage for the broadening of the state One-Stop partnership to include the entities responsible for vocational and technical education and workforce literacy.* However, although DWD now has policy oversight of these programs, local services are provided through independent educational entities. While the JTPA and ES/UI service delivery systems see their futures as clearly linked at this point, the school-to-work, adult education, and vocational education systems are not yet convinced of the need to join an integrated One-Stop Career Center system.

EVOLUTION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF STATE ONE-STOP DESIGN

For more than a decade, the state of Indiana has been moving toward integrated delivery of workforce development services. Starting in 1984, the state began developing a Strategic Plan for merging the Indiana Office of Occupational Development—which was responsible for JTPA programs—with the Indiana Employment Security Division, which administered Wagner-Peyser and UI programs. The Strategic Plan called for the development of "One-Stop Shopping" to permit job seekers to apply for a full range of job preparation and placement services from a single location.

During the late 1980s, the JTPA and ES/UI agencies were consolidated into the Indiana Department of Employment and Training Services, which facilitated the closer alignment of ES/UI and JTPA services at the local level. Six local SDAs were selected to pilot integrated services, using integrated planning and realignment of service staff along functional, rather than programmatic lines. To emphasize that federal DOL resources were now supporting an integrated set of program objectives, the state began submitting a single state plan to the U.S. Department of Labor for the JTPA and Wagner-Peyser programs. Under an ES 2000 grant from DOL, the state further developed its collaborative workforce development initiatives and conducted on-site analyses of the pilot projects. State staff also visited employment and training systems in Germany and Denmark. As an outcome of these internal and external reviews, a report entitled "Challenge for Indiana's Employment and Training System" reaffirmed that the state was moving in the right direction.

During the early 1990s, the number of different programs involved in consolidation efforts was expanded to include workforce literacy programs and vocational and technical education programs. At the state level, the Department of Employment and Training Services, the Office of Workplace Literacy, and the Commission on Vocational and Technical Education were merged into a single state agency in 1991 via executive order of the governor. In 1994, state legislation confirmed the governor's initiative by creating the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), which is responsible for JTPA, ES, UI, workforce literacy, and vocational and technical education programs, as well as housing the Workforce Proficiency Panel[1] and the Indiana Occupational Information Coordination Committee.

Indiana's original Strategic Plan for Employment and Training, released in 1985, announced the policy of collocation and integration and "one-stop shopping," making Indiana one of the "front runner" states in the planning and implementation of the One-Stop concept. As a result of the state's early experimentation with and research into consolidated workforce development systems, the Indiana Legislature passed comprehensive state workforce development legislation in 1993 that included the Workforce Development Center (WDC) concept as a key component of a wider system. As stated in its One-Stop Implementation Grant proposal, the objective of the Indiana One-Stop system—congruent with its earlier vision—is "to implement a statewide public One-Stop Career Center system that prepares Indiana businesses and citizens to be competitive in a global economy by meeting customers' needs for employment and qualified employees, skill development and skill certification through quality services, customer choice, universal accessibility, and accountability for outcomes."

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[1] Established in 1992, the Indiana Workforce Proficiency Panel was mandated to work with representatives from business, labor, and education to identify a common set of essential and technical skills required for success in major occupational areas. A board and staff are overseeing the development of workforce proficiency standards for secondary, post secondary, and adult learners in a series of occupational areas.

The state's vision for One-Stop career centers includes both co-location and increased coordination/resource sharing across the JTPA and ES/UI program partners. At a minimum, the goal is to have the on-site presence of JTPA, ES, UI, veterans outreach and services, and Title V Older Workers services. In addition, the state One-Stop vision calls for One-Stop career centers to offer access to services provided through Vocational Rehabilitation and welfare-to-work programs.[2] As part of the federal One-Stop initiative, the state is planning to eventually have 26 One-Stop centers operational throughout the state. At each One-Stop career center, job seekers are supposed to be able to apply for and receive a full range of job preparation and placement services. Additional service access points will include staffed and unstaffed One-Stop satellite locations linked electronically to career centers via computer, telephone, or fax.

Key features of the services to be made available as a result of the implementation of a statewide One-Stop career center system include the following:

- a comprehensive career center within 50 miles of every Indiana resident;

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[2] The full range of services required to be available through One-Stop career centers includes a long list. When center staff cannot provide direct application and on-site delivery of services for a particular program, they must provide information about the program, its eligibility requirements, and its locations. Programs covered include: cash assistance and Food Stamps, the JOBS program for AFDC recipients, JTPA 8% coordination funds, JTPA 5% older worker funds, Title V Older Worker funds, Food Stamp Employment and Training program, Carl Perkins single parent/displaced homemaker funds, adult basic education services, vocational rehabilitation services, McKinney Act homeless services, secondary and postsecondary technical education programs, Job Corps, migrant and seasonal farmworker programs and apprenticeship programs.

- the provision of high-quality information to employer and job-seeker customers;
- a core menu of standard One-Stop services (described below);
- a core set of One-Stop tools, including automated labor market information, enhanced assessment, and the development of individual service strategies for all One-stop customers;
- customer choice of center location and formats for receiving information;
- customer satisfaction as an organizing principle, including the use of employer and job seeker focus groups for feedback and service improvement;
- the provision of effective, efficient, and professional services that address workforce development, economic development, and individual customer needs.

To accomplish these objectives, state respondents indicate that they need to work to change the thinking of state and local One-Stop staff to support an integrated service system. Otherwise, they indicated, staff will still be concerned with agency "turf" issues, rather than with achieving a new way of doing things. State One-Stop staff emphasize the importance of achieving a holistic approach to services, so that customers can be served by any staff person at any center without it mattering where the individual receives his/her paycheck. Staff development will be essential to realizing this goal.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

State Advisory Bodies. Since 1993, the state-level governance of workforce development programs has been provided by the State Human Resource Investment Council (SHRIC), which advises the governor and DWD Commissioner on issues relating to the JTPA, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Basic Education, and Carl Perkins programs. The Council also addresses broader "human investment" and welfare reform issues.

Rather than involve the SHRIC in the details of One-Stop design and implementation, however, the state has created a separate One-Stop Advisory Council. The One-Stop Advisory Council—formed in mid-1995, after Indiana received the One-Stop Implementation Grant award—is comprised of representatives of various stakeholders in One-Stop development, including the SHRIC, the JTPA service delivery areas, affected state agencies (e.g., Workforce Development, Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) Commerce, Education), the community college system, labor unions, the state chamber of commerce, and employers. At their meetings—which are generally held on an "as needed" basis--members of the Advisory Council are given reports on One-Stop implementation progress, brainstorm implementation issues, and provide input on One-Stop policies. Their recommendations are not binding on the state or local One-Stop partners.

Key State One-Stop Partners. Key state agencies relevant to One-Stop planning and development include the Department of Workforce Development and the Family and Social Services Administration. Linkages between One-Stop partners and welfare-to-work and school-to-work initiatives are also emphasized. The importance of coordination with economic development initiatives is recognized through the involvement of the state Department of Commerce on the One-Stop Advisory Council.

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is viewed as the lead agency in the state-level One-Stop initiative. Since the creation of the consolidated Department of Workforce Development in 1994, this single state agency has had primary oversight responsibility for most of the programs mandated for inclusion in local One-Stop career centers, including JTPA, ES, and UI. The Commissioner of DWD is the focal point for unified state-level implementation and oversight of the One-Stop initiative. His Deputy Commissioner for Field Operations and Program Development is the state's One-Stop Project Manager. A reorganization of DWD in October of 1995 linked One-Stop design and planning more closely to program development and field operations functions for ES and UI. The reorganization deliberately blurred the program lines separating ES and UI by creating an overall Director of Operations responsible to the deputy commissioner who leads the One-Stop team. The local DWD career center manager and local One-Stop program directors (described below) report to this individual.

Even though they are now located in a single consolidated agency, DWD staff do not envision that the vocational and technical education and workforce literacy programs will become fully integrated partners in local One-Stop service delivery systems in the near future. Because the JTPA, ES, and UI programs have now shared nearly an eleven-year history of integrated planning at the state and local levels, staff associated with these programs have been cross-trained and have a history of shared experience in the delivery of integrated services to job-seeker customers. Veterans service representatives are also generally comfortable with the delivery of services in an integrated services setting. In contrast, local vocational and adult education and literacy programs still have their own delivery arrangements involving providers that are not co-located in Workforce Development Centers. Progress in developing linkages and partnerships with these entities continues through the school-to-work initiative.

Full coordination between the One-Stop career center initiative and DWD's vocational and technical education partners, as well as K-12 local education partners, has been difficult to achieve to date. State respondents hope that the state's School-to-Work grant will facilitate coordination at both the state and local levels. A May 1996 memorandum signed by the deputy commissioners responsible for One-Stop and Education and Training encourages local school-to-work collaborative teams to identify potential linkages, including electronic connections between One-Stop career centers and schools, and develop joint action plans for marketing and service delivery efforts targeted to students, job seekers, and employers.

The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) also plays an important role in One-Stop planning and implementation. First, this agency is the administrative agency for the Title V Older Americans Act, which is a mandated local partner in One-Stop career centers. A state-level non-financial agreement between FSSA and DWD ensures the coordination of Title V services with One-Stop career centers.[3] Second, FSSA is the lead agency for the Indiana Collaboration Project (described below), which is addressing barriers to interagency collaboration and integrated services at the state and local levels. Third, FSSA is the agency responsible for the Vocational Rehabilitation program as well as for the Indiana welfare-to-work programs for AFDC and Food Stamp recipients. Because the state's One-Stop vision calls for VR and welfare-to-work services to be accessible through One-Stop career centers, coordination and referral linkages, at a minimum, must be developed between DWD and FSSA staff at the local level.

State Framework for Local Governance

The state framework for local governance of One-Stop career centers calls for input from a variety of local entities in the development of a local One-Stop plan. Each

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[3] Under the joint "action plan" developed between FSSA and DWD, Title V enrollees may be trained to work as Customer Service Assistants in One-Stop career centers, in addition to being placed at other public or non-profit agencies.

One-Stop career center must also form an informal advisory board with representation from a wide range of local stakeholders.

The One-Stop planning process divides the state into 16 planning units that coincide with the service areas of the JTPA Private Industry Councils (PICs). Local One-Stop plans must specify the roles to be played by local elected officials, workforce development policy boards, local education boards and institutions, and Step Ahead Councils in the development and implementation of the local plan.[4]

Private Industry Councils are designated by the state to play a major role in the design and implementation of local One-Stop services. The state envisions that PICs will move from a relatively narrow role of overseeing programs for the economically disadvantaged and dislocated workers to a broader role providing joint planning, oversight and evaluation of local Workforce Development Centers in partnership with the state Department of Workforce Development. PIC One-Stop responsibilities include:

- developing a Unified Local Employment and Training Plan in partnership with local elected officials;
- negotiating an Integrated Services Contract with the state DWD for the sharing of JTPA and ES/UI resources in the operation of the local One-Stop system;
- providing integrated fiscal management of JTPA, education, and older workers' funds, as well as funds from other programs integrated in One-Stop career center operations.
- providing planning, oversight, and evaluation of local One-Stop career centers and making recommendations to the state DWD and SHRIC.

Although the state has not passed legislation reshaping PICs into broader workforce investment boards, some of the state's PICs have expanded or modified their board composition to include all partners required on local One-Stop Advisory Boards. In addition, some PICs, including the Indianapolis PIC (IPIC) have begun reshaping their identities by removing themselves from direct service delivery and specializing in administrative oversight and policy making. PICs may determine the composition of their local One-Stop advisory councils, but must include all major stakeholders in the planning and implementation process.

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[4] Step Ahead Councils are county boards representing social service and supportive service providers, which are mandated to develop strategies to overcome barriers to customer participation in workforce development services. In carrying out this mandate, they are active in providing child care services and developing alliances with community based organizations and neighborhood groups.

State guidelines for day to day administration of One-Stop career centers call for co-management of centers by a single DWD manager and the JTPA program manager. Each center also has a designated facilitator, who helps to arrange cross-program functional teams to develop and implement integrated services. In local service delivery areas with multiple career centers, the DWD manager of one of the centers is designated as the One-Stop "Program Director." This individual reports to the Field Operations manager within the DWD Operations Division, which oversees local implementation of One-Stop plans and policies.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

As a matter of policy, Indiana promotes open communication among workforce development stakeholders throughout the state. In part, this goal is accomplished by encouraging stakeholders to be involved in a number of different boards, commissions, and advisory councils and work groups at both the state and local levels. Through the regular meetings of related boards and councils, agency heads and commissioners keep in touch with the points of view of representatives of unions, employers, job seekers, chambers of commerce and heads of the key partner agencies.

Frequent communication is also encouraged among the various state-level staff involved in One-Stop planning. A small One-Stop planning team acts as a central clearinghouse for communications about One-Stop implementation. Department of Workforce Development staff with planning or field responsibility for One-Stop development have frequent contacts with the five members of the One-Stop team, which is led by the DWD Deputy Commissioner for Program Development. Formed in March 1995 and staffed by individuals selected based upon their broad skills, knowledge and experience, the One-Stop team coordinates and oversees One-Stop plans in the areas of labor market information, integrated information systems, the development of new customer products, quality of services, and financial management procedures. Members of the state One-Stop team each have their own task assignments and areas of expertise. However, they also work well together, keeping each other informed about all aspects of state and the local One-Stop implementation issues.

Throughout the policy and planning process for One-Stop Career Centers, interagency state-level work groups have met to work on particular issues, such as infrastructure investments to facilitate the labor exchange process and the development of a uniform assessment system. Work group membership has generally included state, local, and private sector representatives. The Indiana Policy Council, which has representation from both workforce development and human service agencies, is another body developed to support interagency and cross-program collaboration by "removing inter-agency barriers that inhibit the efficient delivery of services." One of the Policy Council's Projects—The Indiana Collaboration Project—facilitates information exchange designed to minimize redundant data collection on clients common to the partner agencies.

To help communicate its vision of One-Stop career centers to local planning teams, the state has developed detailed minimum state requirements for local centers in the areas of staffing, core services, additional services, location, technology, software products, and services for employers. These requirements are spelled out in detail in the state's One-Stop Implementation Grant proposal as well as in other policy documents. Within the state-established parameters, however, local entities have the flexibility to customize services to meet unique community needs. The Unified Local Employment and Training Plan is the vehicle for communicating the local customized service plan to the state.

Ongoing state-local communication about One-Stop implementation issues within the DWD bureaucracy is designed to pass through the DWD Field Operations manager, to whom local (DWD) Program Directors report. Monthly conference calls between state and local One-Stop staff are used to address implementation issues. In addition, a face-to-face meeting is held at least once every six months. State specialists in ES, UI, and veterans employment services issues provide individualized support to local career center staff on an as-needed basis.

As the statewide roll-out of One-Stop career centers continues, the state plans to develop a state-local management team that will meet regularly to share information, review implementation problems, and develop longer-range plans to support local One-Stop development. Challenges identified by the state field operations staff as a result of the new integrated DWD field operations structure include how to help the new integrated local One-Stop center managers and Program Directors learn about and deal with the performance and resource issues across multiple programs, rather than focusing on a single program.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

Late in 1994, Indiana was awarded a One-Stop Planning and Development grant of $270,471. This grant was originally intended to be used to support statewide implementation of a common intake system as well as for development of technology-based customer products. However, because the state received notice of its One-Stop Implementation Grant award of $4.2 million soon after the award of its Planning and Development Grant, the two grants were used to support a consolidated One-Stop implementation work plan. A second-year federal Implementation Grant of $2.6 million brought the total federal investment in One-Stop development in Indiana to roughly $7 million.

With the exception of support for the state One-Stop team, the grant funds have been allocated to short-term or one-time costs. Most of the state grant (76%) is being used at the state level to build the automated infrastructure necessary to support local One-Stop career centers and to support capacity building and staff development activities. Planned activities to support the development of the statewide One-Stop career center system include the following: (1) to design and develop an integrated information support system and self-service technologies that will provide multiple paths for customers to access One-Stop services; (2) to re-engineer the delivery of customer services based on a prototype developed at the Indianapolis Eastside Center; (3) to expand the number of One-Stop career centers statewide to a total of 26 centers; (4) to retool the business processes and physical workflow of One-Stop career centers; (5) to provide staff retraining and capacity building supports; and (6) to expand access to improved and user-friendly labor market information. Under the first year of the Implementation Grant, local One-Stop career centers could apply for up to $150,000 from the state to support local system development efforts. A total of over $800,000 was provided to local service delivery areas in the form of 14 different One-Stop implementation awards ranging in size from $20,000 to $144,000.

The federal One-Stop investments in system development have not occurred in a vacuum. Rather, they were preceded by and are being supplemented by the investment of substantial additional federal, state, and local funds. For example, the state estimates that building its automated job matching systems will cost a total of about $10 million, which will come from a variety of state and DOL funds, as well as non-federal sources used primarily for local training and center costs associated with system implementation. Some of the activities included in the initial One-Stop grant application have had to be modified because the grant awards have been less than the amount requested. For example, as a result of funding shortfalls, planned marketing and "consumer report card" activities have been put on hold until additional funding sources are identified. However, state respondents identified the federal Implementation Grant as a "reaffirmation [of the fact that] we were moving in the right direction, and [a help in] pulling the pieces together into an integrated plan."

To support the development of integrated services at the local level over the past several years, Indiana's Department of Workforce Development has developed "integrated service contracts" to formalize the sharing of staff and services between the three major partners—ES, UI, and JTPA. In the past, these contracts have concentrated on allocating costs to participating programs based on "inputs"—the resources contributed by each program. However, starting in FY 1997, Indiana will be participating in the pilot testing of the new cost allocation principles developed by the Cost Allocation Workgroup established by Region V of the Department of Labor. Under the new cost allocation principles, the adequacy of cost-sharing agreements will be determined by whether the agreements result in the achievement of the targeted productivity "outcomes" identified by each of the participating partners, rather than by a narrow accounting of their resource inputs.

RELEVANCE OF THE STATE DESIGN TO THE FOUR FEDERAL GOALS

The statewide development of One-Stop career centers is intended to follow a prototype developed at the Indianapolis Eastside Career Center. The Eastside Center embodies a number of new concepts for the delivery of customer services, including an attractive physical facility, customer access to self-assisted technology-based information systems, staff integration, and a focus on customer satisfaction. Below, we discuss how the new career center design relates to each of the federal One-Stop themes.

Universal Access

Providing information to One-Stop career center customers is viewed by the state as a key One-Stop service. The availability of high quality information through a variety of technology-based mediums is expected to make One-Stop services accessible to a wide base of employer and job-seeker customers. According to the One-Stop vision promoted in Indiana, however, the goal of universal access is not to be realized through self-service options alone. Core services, available to all customers of One-Stop career centers, must also include staffed services such as counseling, assessment, facilitated labor exchange, referral, and case management.

Customer Choice

Local job seekers and employers may choose to receive services from any One-Stop center in the state. At a minimum, there will be one full-service One-Stop career center in each service area. Customers will also have a choice of which medium to use in receiving information from the career center system, including face-to-face assistance, computer-based information products, video, written materials, and telephone assistance. Information regarding job openings, wages, and hiring requirements will all be available through multiple mediums. As the One-Stop system is expanded across the state, customers will also have increased options for accessing information and services on-line and in satellite locations such as schools, libraries, and other public access points.

The information provided by One-Stop career centers on local education and training programs and local employers is also intended to help customers make more informed decisions as consumers of education and workforce development services.

Integrated Services

The state of Indiana has developed a very detailed list of services that must be available in One-Stop career centers. These include self-service registration, information, and assessment; orientation sessions describing available services; an information resource area or library; staff-directed services for intake, registration, counseling, assessment, and referral for all job seeker customers; a training area for testing and workshops; and additional intensive services for targeted customers such as technical training, education, vocational rehabilitation services, and welfare-to-work services.

The state has mandated a high degree of consolidation and integration between JTPA, ES, and UI staff and resources in the delivery of services at One-Stop career centers. As illustrated by both local career centers we visited in Indiana, the use of integrated service contracts between these key partners has made possible a high degree of cross-agency staffing of key functions including reception, UI registration, assistance with job placement services, and counseling about career options. Involvement by additional partners in integrating the delivery of services is more dependent on agreements negotiated at the local level.

Although full-service One-Stop centers are expected to achieve a high degree of service integration across local partners, Indiana expects that a number of other local service delivery sites for ES/UI services will continue to exist as satellite centers. Limited budgets, long-term leases, and other factors will prevent the transformation of all service locations into full-service One-Stop centers.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

The performance goals established for the Indiana One-Stop career center system are designed to mirror four general principles: (1) employment is the objective of workforce development; (2) customer satisfaction is key; (3) accountability measures should be based on easily accessible information; and (4) performance measures should recognize the customer-centric orientation of services and the importance of self-service modes of delivery.

During 1996, a state–local workgroup is refining a performance measurement approach based on the following elements of One-Stop outcomes:

- *Employment outcomes*, including placement rates, secured employment rates, and long-term placement rates;
- *Customer satisfaction*, measured for employers and job seekers who use One-Stop services, with a goal of improving customer satisfaction over time;
- *Market penetration*, measured by dividing the number of job openings listed by a One-Stop system by the number of new hires within the service area; and
- *Level of utilization of self-service opportunities* for job seekers and employers.

The state has developed specific state and local career center performance measures and goals. State outcome goals include the following:

- a 10% reduction in the proportion of UI claimants who exhaust their benefits;
- the development of individual service strategies for all UI claimants;
- the receipt of career center services by at least 50% of all secondary school students sometime before they complete 9th grade;
- a 10% decrease in the proportion of staff time spent in data entry tasks and a 10% increase in the proportion of time spent in face-to-face interaction with customers;
- an increase of 100,000 in the number of job openings available through automated job listings;

- an increase of 100,000 in the number of job seekers accessible to employers through automated resume listings;
- an increase in the number of sites where individuals can access basic workforce information;
- an increase of 60,000 in the number of individuals with post-secondary degrees with access to America's Job Bank;
- an increase of 100,000 in the number of public assistance recipients with access to America's Job Bank.

One-Stop performance will also be measured at the local office level, with quarterly monitoring of the percentage of UI claimants with individual service plans, the number of students using career center services, the percentage of successful job matches, the level of overall customer satisfaction, and the utilization of self-service options. Conformance to state guidelines for office appearance is also reviewed periodically.

Another element of an increased state emphasis on accountability under the One-Stop system will be the implementation of accountability standards for DWD's career center Program Directors and center managers. They will be evaluated based on their success in achieving systemwide goals, including the overall operation of their office, the use of the information resource area, the level of overall customer satisfaction and employer relations, and the extent of integration achieved between JTPA and other One-Stop partners.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

Indiana has identified and begun responding to a wide range of staff development needs that are associated with One-Stop implementation. These include: (1) training on an overview of the One-Stop mission/goals and operating procedures for a full-service career center; 2) general training in customer-driven services and continuous improvement practices; (3) cross-training of specific program staff about partner programs and procedures; and (4) training in specific technology applications. Training in these different areas is being provided by a wide variety of agencies and organizations, including the training section of DWD's human resources unit, staff of specific state and local partners.

Staff training has occurred in several different waves to support the different phases of One-Stop development in the state. At the time of the initial Indiana initiative to promote consolidation of services across JTPA and ES/UI partners in 1985, training was designed to achieve a common understanding of the One-Stop initiative and to train the staffs of JTPA, ES, UI, and VETS about the details of the different programs operating within a local career center setting. More recent waves of training have continued to focus on cross-training for front-line staff as well as on training for the new automated technology-based systems and products.

Current DWD staff development offerings focus on the needs of staff at various levels within the career center setting. For example, training designed for managers includes training in leading effective meetings, problem solving, and communication skills. Training designed for line operations staff includes training on counseling theory, basic communication skills, career counseling, and case management. Technical training provided to line staff by the DWD Policy and Program Development Unit, in association with One-Stop development, has included UI Automation Training and beginning and refresher courses in the state's automated job matching system. Local One-Stop sites have also used their One-Stop Implementation Grants to fund additional training in cross-program identities and procedures, the concepts associated with a customer service approach, the use of labor market information, case management, electronic communications, and "acceptance of change."

In addition to these activities, Indiana was awarded a DOL Challenge Grant for capacity building, which was used to identify the overall work-based competencies needed by state and local ES, UI, and JTPA staff to perform their jobs in a One-Stop setting in a number of functional areas, including supervision, business administration and management, interviewing, assessing, counseling, and training. A program-specific set of competencies was developed for UI staff. As part of the competency system, state staff are assessing themselves to ascertain whether they possess the skills needed for their jobs. After each assessments is completed, the individual meets with his or her supervisor to identify training needs and develop a training plan to respond to skills gaps.

DWD staff are also participants in a statewide initiative—Indiana Commitment to Quality—designed to improve customer awareness and build the capacity for continuous improvement and cost-effective services. Capacity building efforts affecting local career center staff and other local partners include Quality/Teamwork training sessions provided for local One-Stop teams and "creativity" training for local One-Stop facilitators.

Improvements in Labor Market Information (ALMIS) and Related Technology-Based Products

Although co-location and cross-training of staff is an important element of Indiana's One-Stop initiative, its One-Stop Implementation Grant proposal says that the key to improving the state's career center system lies not in building physical structures or moving staff but in using technology effectively. Automated information systems are seen as effective tools for facilitating the match between employers and job seekers and for providing self-assisted access to information as a key resource to all customers. To support integrated service delivery statewide, the state plans to design and implement developments in two areas—a single integrated access information system (described below under management information systems) and a technology infrastructure to support a range of business and job-seeker-oriented products. Taken together, the two developments make up a seamless "Customer Self-Service Computer System" that provides technology-based services to customers at the same time that it manages administrative information for service providers and program managers and promotes information sharing across agency partners.

Improved labor market information is viewed as an important tool for meeting the needs of a changing labor market. As part of the development of One-Stop career centers, the state hopes to improve the quality of labor market information and put it into formats that will be useful both to job seekers/career changers and to businesses. Indiana calls for local One-Stop career centers to provide high quality labor market information in Information Resource Areas (IRAs), which are envisioned as open-entry user-friendly rooms that "empower customers to meet their personal goals and information needs." IRAs will provide customers access to relevant labor market information, as well as job matching and career information. In many centers, customers will be assisted in the use of automated information systems by older workers enrolled in the Title V Older Worker program.[5]

The state has already invested substantially in a number of automated labor market information and career information products for use by career center customers. The automated statewide labor exchange (ALEX) and the Job Information Center (JIC) both appear to be popular with customers. CHOICES CT, an automated career information delivery system, helps adults relate their skills and interests to other career and education options and includes information about education and training opportunities. The computer-based National Career Aptitude System (NCAS) assesses a user's ability to learn and perform tasks associated with hundreds of occupations. A Microcomputer Occupational Information System (Micro-OIS) provides occupational supply and demand information based on state and local labor market information.

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[5] A non-financial agreement between the Family and Social Services Administration, which administers Title V and the Department of Workforce Development approves the use of Title V participants as information aides in One-Stop information resource areas.

Targeted improvements in labor market products as part of the One-Stop initiative include (1) improving the ability of career centers to offer up-to-date information on local labor market trends and in-demand occupations by funding local labor market studies; (2) training front-line service delivery staff in how to use local labor market information; (3) conducting focus groups involving employers and job seekers in discussions about the long-term design of the labor exchange function in One-Stop career centers; (4) installing ALEX kiosks and PC-based ALEX systems in post-secondary education and training institutions and other "high volume" community sites; and (5) making America's Job Bank and America's Talent Bank available to customers in One-Stop career center Information Resource Areas, and (6) developing a more user-friendly alternative to CHOICES.

In addition, the state has developed a process by which employers can fax in a job order and another process allowing employer or job-seeker customers to request labor market materials to be faxed to them. Another new customer-oriented product designed to support local economic development efforts is a "Workforce Profile System" that uses individual job-seeker information from the automated job match system to construct a demographic profile of the job seekers in a given geographic area. One shortfall in the planned activities at the time of the site visit was the "Consumer Report Information System," whose further development had been delayed until additional funds were found to support this project.

Management Information Systems

The Single Integrated Access System (SIAS) is viewed as an essential element of the Indiana One-Stop approach because it will free up staff from data collection tasks and enable them to work with job seekers on improving their skills and job finding abilities. Perhaps more importantly, an integrated automated system appears to customers as a single process flow. Contrary to early fears, customers do not appear to mind entering information about themselves into the computer, particularly when they compare it to the previous approach of "filling out the paper and standing in line."

The SIAS system is designed to facilitate the exchange of information between a variety of users, including customers and partner agencies, by using an open architecture plan. The Internet will be the major outside access point for the system, with local office use supported by a combination of wide-area networks and local-area networks. User interfaces will consist of Microsoft Windows presentation layers of software with high-performance middle layers of hardware and software to facilitate the information sharing functions. Functional components of the system will include the following:

- The *single intake/access module* will allow individual customers to enter their own intake information, access the state job-matching system for direct or staff-interfaced job referrals, determine UI eligibility, obtain information about eligibility for other programs, and enroll in training or education classes. All 26 service locations that are or will become One-Stop career centers are already using the automated single intake process.
- A *job seeker access module* will offer individual customers access to stand-alone instructional and informational software and resources including computer-assisted learning modules, self-assessment software, letter-writing and resume-writing software, information on local labor markets, occupations, and businesses, and job listings maintained on the ALEX system.
- A *business access module* will offer employers the ability to place a job order or retrieve or update prior job orders, conduct searches of applicant profiles, access labor market information at various geographic levels, access America's Job Bank and America's Talent Bank, submit required employer reports and payroll taxes electronically, and submit a business profile to inform job seekers about the business.
- A *partner access module* will offer each partner agency a variety of ways to exchange information with other workforce development agencies. A set of "business rules" will guide information sharing and will be incorporated into data exchange linkages between information systems. Currently cross-agency information sharing is in the conceptual stage.
- A *staff access module* will allow staff access into different data entry and retrieval screens depending on their approved security access level. Staff will use this module to (1) input data for customers or help customers to use the system; (2) scan in documents to be used to verify eligibility for various programs; (3) assess UI eligibility; (4) assist customers in job match difficulties; and (5) retrieve pre-formatted and ad hoc reports.

Most individual service delivery areas have also invested in an automated case management system that re-enters the customer-level information from the single intake process and provides an automated system for recording individual assessment, service plans, costs, service unit tracking, and follow-up data for participants receiving these services.

Marketing

The re-engineered One-Stop career center system is designed to provide customer-driven automated services to large numbers of customers, thereby freeing up staff to provide "value-added" services to customers who need more individualized assistance in the form of individual counseling, assistance with job matching, and case management. However, the state is wary of marketing the new One-Stop services too widely until field offices have determined what customer workloads they can handle.

At the time of the site visit, the state One-Stop Advisory Council and One-Stop staff team within DWD were in the process of determining the name and logo to be used in marketing One-Stop career centers throughout the state. The decision was made to use the name "workforce development centers" in describing the One-Stop centers to the public. An advertising consultant was helping the state One-Stop team decide on a marketing strategy. To support marketing efforts, several new brochures have been developed, including a *Guide to Workforce Development Centers* and *The Art and Science of Finding a Job*. The state One-Stop team has also made a commitment to conduct joint marketing efforts with the state's School-to-Work team.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Indiana provides an example of a state that has been working slowly and steadily toward the integration of DOL-funded workforce development services over an extended period. Over an eleven-year period, the state has gradually evolved its One-Stop approach from reducing duplication of effort and promoting consolidated program intake to promoting increased integration across the DOL funding streams. Because of the long history of state and local integration projects, One-Stop implementation has been relatively smooth in Indiana.

The federal One-Stop Implementation Grant has enabled the state to expand integration efforts to include a broader set of partners and develop a model for integrated customer services at the local level. Using the Indianapolis Eastside Center as a pilot for the process to be used in re-engineering the design and delivery of customer services in an integrated One-Stop model, the state has now specified the process to be followed in One-Stop transformation. This process includes formation of a local advisory council composed of stakeholders, making sure local staff have the team-building and problem solving skills to guide the transformation process, and keeping seamless customer services as the guiding principle.

The Information Resource Area (IRA) has become another part of the One-Stop model that the state is interested in replicating in other One-Stop centers throughout the state. Customer satisfaction surveys completed to date indicate that customers find the IRA useful and are adapting well to computer-based information access. Customers also appear to be responding positively to the professionalism and customer orientation of the new centers: trained staff who are "customer conscious," the absence of long lines, and the availability of Title V "assistants" who can help customers in the use of the new technologies.

Although some projects are moving more slowly than originally anticipated, Indiana appears to be well on the way toward building its One-Stop technology-based products and systems and training state and local staff in the use of these systems. At the time of the site visit, three reorganized One-Stop centers had been opened and two more were planned to open shortly. Twenty-six service locations had begun to implement integrated intake systems. A total of 17 touch-screen ALEX kiosks had been installed in other public facilities. Collaboration with additional programs and agencies, most notably school-to-work activities, has increased.

Local respondents, while generally complimentary about the role played by the state, expressed some concerns about the rapid rate of system transformation being attempted as part of the DOL Implementation Grant initiative. Some local respondents indicated that the DOL grant has forced the state to try to move more quickly on implementation of One-Stop systems than they were prepared to do and has caused some systems to be rushed into service prematurely. However, more recently, the state has indicated that it will not rush into the establishment of the 26 One-Stops during the three-year implementation period. This may lead to a more thoughtful critique of the system as it evolves and the continued development of more refined products.

APPENDIX E

EASTSIDE CENTER, INDIANAPOLIS NETWORK FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During July 1996

EASTSIDE CENTER, INDIANAPOLIS NETWORK FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

One-Stop Profile

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EASTSIDE CENTER, INDIANAPOLIS NETWORK FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

One Stop Local Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Eastside Workforce Development Center is one of three full-service One-Stop Career Centers in Indianapolis and Marion County developed by the Indianapolis Network for Employment and Training (iNET), in partnership with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Other Centers in the local network include the Westside Workforce Development Center and the Metro Workforce Development Center. The Eastside Workforce Development Center (WDC) is located on the east side of Indianapolis in a converted telephone factory in one of several industrial parks along what is called the Shadeland Corridor. Although this corridor is still home to a number of major manufacturers, over the last two decades, some large manufacturers have either moved out of the area or closed operations. Many of the employers near the Eastside Center now consist of small- to medium-sized manufacturers.

Indianapolis, a city of just under one million, has a low-income population of more than 100,000 residents and a minority population of around 200,000. The area is currently enjoying an economic boom, with an unemployment rate of less than 4%. A record number of new jobs has been created in recent years in the transportation, utilities, communications, and services sectors. Although employers are experiencing a severe labor shortage and there are many job vacancies, some low-income and predominantly minority neighborhoods continue to sustain high unemployment rates.

Workforce development services in Indiana are characterized by a long history of inter-agency coordination, co-location, and service integration. The most powerful impetus for the movement toward collaboration was an executive order signed by the governor in 1987 that formed the Indiana Department of Employment and Training (IDETS), composed of the former Indiana Employment Security Division (Wagner-Peyser and Unemployment Insurance) and the Indiana Office of Occupational Development (JTPA). A second merger in 1991 combined IDETS, the Commission on Vocational and Technical Education, and Workforce Literacy to form the Indiana

Department of Workforce Development (DWD). DWD is currently responsible for the development of the One-Stop system in Indiana.

At the local level, a series of reform initiatives took place between 1987 and 1994 in the organization and delivery of workforce development services in Indianapolis and other local areas throughout the state. These included:

- Local responses to a state mandate to develop integrated workforce development services at the local level, under the direction of local Private Industry Councils.
- The implementation of a pilot EDWAA/UI coordination project.
- The implementation of a pilot project to develop automated job information for use in a self-service environment.
- The receipt of a Job Training 2000 grant to expand customer access to job listings and career information.
- The implementation of the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program, resulting in closer coordination among UI, ES, and JTPA services.

As a result of these reforms and an ongoing commitment to coordination among multiple funding streams, JTPA, ES, and UI staff were already co-located at the "old" Eastside Center and had already made significant progress toward service coordination when, in April 1994, a project team was developed to initiate the "Eastside Integrated Services Office Project" in connection with a planned move to a new Eastside facility.

Although the Department of Workforce Development and the Indianapolis Private Industry Council (IPIC) were already jointly planning a move toward "One-Stop Shopping," the DOL Implementation Grant provided the opportunity to *reengineer the delivery of integrated workforce development services* in a pilot Center. Because the Eastside Center was about to move into a new shared facility with plentiful space, it was jointly decided by DWD and IPIC to pilot Indiana's "Office of the Future." Using the Eastside Center as the model site, the state intended to test a number of key One-Stop concepts, including customer service as a key principle, assisted self-help as a delivery mode, flexibility of space and programs in the delivery of services, and improved customer access to facilities and programs. To implement these key themes, the Eastside Workforce Development Center has undertaken the task of integrating ES, UI, and JTPA staff, developing a single intake process for all local programs, and providing an array of services across multiple funding streams.

As an Eastside Center manager commented, "customers don't care where employees get their paycheck, they just want good service." This statement embodies an important aspect of the Eastside Center's One-Stop vision—namely, the provision of seamless services in a self-assisted environment, supported by a comprehensive technology-based information system which empowers customers to define and direct much of their own job or career search. Center planners were clear that they did not want just to overlay a One-Stop approach on top of the old system, but were committed to an entirely new way of serving customers.

Several key contextual factors have influenced the evolution of the Eastside Center. These include: (l) a gap between the skills of the Indianapolis workforce and the labor needs of local employers; (2) the low local unemployment rate; (3) the designation of the Center as a state-wide model; and (4) the dynamics of a changing organizational and political environment, both at the statewide and local levels. Each of these points is briefly discussed below:

- *There is a growing gap between the labor needs of local employers and the skills possessed by new labor market entrants and other individuals looking for employment.* Area employers are having a hard time filling job openings and are concerned about the skills gap between the qualifications they would like new workers to have and the work skills possessed by the individuals currently seeking work. To improve One-Stop's reputation among employers, DWD and the iNET network are seeking to improve the services offered to employers in order to help them identify qualified workers among Indianapolis residents.
- *Low unemployment rates have made it difficult for employers to find new workers.* In order to help employers recruit workers for available job openings, the Center has reached out to under-served groups, including residents of low-income neighborhoods, minorities, and youth. The workforce development system has been designed to offer customers from these groups a wide range of services to prepare them to fill available jobs.
- *The selection of the Eastside Center as a joint state-local project to develop the "ideal" Center for the state has resulted in an emphasis on a participatory planning and decision-making process.* Before they co-located, staff from the participating agencies, together with an advisory council comprised of a cross section of state and local stakeholders, developed a participatory decision-making process that allowed partners to work together cooperatively. In disseminating the resulting service delivery model to other sites, local partners are also emphasizing the importance of the "model" participatory planning process.

- *A changing organizational, economic, and political environment has influenced Center design and service delivery.* During its first year and a half of operations, the Center has had to deal with a number of organizational changes and political uncertainties, including a change in the local "Program Director" responsible for guiding and overseeing the local One-Stop implementation process. At the local level, the level of Center staffing was reduced, primarily through attrition, and a new JTPA service provider was selected through a competitive process. These changes have required additional management and staff training, accommodation to changed management structures, and increased flexibility on the part of staff.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Organizational and Governance of the iNET System. In the Marion County service delivery area, Indiana's Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the local Indianapolis Network for Employment ant Training (iNET) jointly plan, manage and oversee integrated workforce development services. A number of events have influenced the evolution of the organization and governance of the One-Stop system in Marion County. A brief summary of these events follows.

- *Changes in the PIC's oversight responsibilities:* In 1988, a state initiative recommended local integration of employment and training systems, with Private Industry Councils (PICs) to play a lead role in designing the local transition. In keeping with this directive, the Indianapolis Private Industry Council (IPIC) took on the responsibility of guiding the development of a local integrated workforce development system. The following year, the name "iNET" was adopted as the new identifier for the transformed One-Stop system in Marion County.
- *Changes in the PIC's service delivery role.* In 1995, IPIC divested itself of its direct JTPA service delivery role, by "spinning off" an independent service provider organization. A competitive bidding process to select a JTPA service provider in 1996 resulted in the selection of Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana, a private non-profit organization, as the new JTPA contractor for Marion County. On July 1, 1996, Goodwill Industries assumed the responsibility for co-managing—with DWD—the three One-Stop Workforce Development centers in Marion County.
- *DWD recommendations for local PIC Board expansion.* In mid-1995 the state Department of Workforce Development encouraged all PICs to expand their board membership to include as wide a range of local stakeholders as possible, in keeping with the One-Stop model. IPIC

followed this suggestion, expanding its board membership to be more representative of the local mix of One-Stop partners and planners and adding a number of new employer representatives to its board roster.[1]

- *Development of local advisory groups:* The state Department of Workforce Development also requires each local Center to create an advisory group composed of local "stakeholders," but leaves decisions about the composition and responsibilities of these groups to individual centers. Because of the Eastside Center's status as a joint state-local pilot project to create a model center, its Advisory Committee is comprised of public and private sector representatives from both the state and the local level. In addition to this Advisory Council, there are plans to form an "employer focus group" to address service and response time issues at the Center.

Thus, the key players in the integration of workforce development services throughout iNET's three centers include the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, which administers ES and UI services; the Indiana Private Industry Council, which oversees JTPA service delivery and provides local policy guidance to the integrated iNET network; and Goodwill Industries, which is the contracted service provider for JTPA services throughout the local service area.

Under the state's directives, a variety of additional local entities also play planning and coordination roles within the local workforce system. Local elected officials are required to convene groups to help coordinate school-to-work and welfare-to-work initiatives and to approve a local employment and training plan, referred to as the Local Plan of Service. Education boards are expected to coordinate with PICs to integrate school-to-work activities into local Service Plans. Step Ahead Councils, which are county boards representing community social service and support interests, are also directed to coordinate with local PICs to ensure that low-income families can benefit from local workforce development services. Thus, the state has encouraged local areas to develop broad partnerships linking integrated workforce development with both school-to-work and welfare-to-work initiatives.

The day-to-day operation of each center is co-managed by a "partnership of equals". Key partners in the operation of the Eastside Center include the Department of Workforce Development, which is responsible for UI and ES services, and the IPIC sub-contractor, Goodwill Industries of Indiana, which is responsible for the direct delivery of JTPA services. Each of the One-Stop centers in Marion County has two co-managers, one representing each organization. Within the Eastside Center, each of the partner programs also has a supervisor for each of the Center's three functional units: customer reception and intake, skills identification and development, and employer relations and placement. Each Center has designated one of the management team to be a "facilitator," responsible for overall coordination of the staff workload. The ES manager is the facilitator for the Eastside Center.

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[1] State legislation calling for the creation of broad Workforce Investment Boards has been introduced but had not yet been passed at the time of the site visit. PIC respondents indicated that passage of this legislation might require a reconfiguration of local One-Stop policy boards.

The DWD managers responsible for ES and UI at the three Marion County One-Stops report to a state-designated DWD Program Director for Marion County, who also coordinates the activities of the designated Goodwill One-Stop liaison. The DWD Program Director reports to the DWD deputy commissioner for Field Operations and Program Development.

One-Stop System Partners. According to DWD's Local One-Stop Planning Guidelines, Center staff must include "two qualified counselors able to serve all populations, and full time staff [who] must be able to provide Wagner-Peyser, veterans, JTPA and UI services." At the Eastside Center these services are provided by two *core partners*:

- *The Department of Workforce Development.* Programs operated by DWD in the Eastside Center include UI, Wagner-Peyser funded activities (ES) and Veterans Services. ES and UI staff are cross-trained and integrated so that they can carry out tasks and services in a range of areas.
- *Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana.* Goodwill is a private non-profit agency that is under contract to iNET to provide JTPA services at all three One-Stop Centers. Goodwill has a center co-manager and staff on site at each of the three centers.

In addition to these *core* partners at the Centers, *supporting* partnerships are also being formed at all three of the One-Stop Centers in Marion County. Relationships and agreements with other *supporting partner* agencies and organizations are in varying stages of development. Although these agreements are SDA-wide, they are implemented at each of the Centers as local arrangements are made. Although services provided by the individual Centers are similar, there is some variation, depending on the needs of the population each generally serves. An on-site presence by supporting partners is introduced initially in those Centers where the need is perceived as greatest. For example, social service partners are co-located at the Metro Workforce Development Center because of the specific needs of the customer population served by that Center. Examples of supporting partnerships within this three center system include:

- *Title V Older Workers*. A non-financial agreement with the Central Indiana Council on Aging (CICOA) arranges for Title V-eligible trainees to assist clients in the Centers' Information Resource Areas. A CICOA representative makes periodic visits to the Eastside Center but staff are not co-located there.
- *Job Corps*. A non-residential program in Indianapolis, Job Corps administrative staff as well as the local Job Corps services will be housed at the Metro Center.
- The *Family Social Service Agency (FSSA)*. Through its Division of Family and Children, FSSA supports several programs at the Centers. These include Indiana's IMPACT program, which provides welfare-to-work services to AFDC and Food Stamp recipients. Goodwill Industries contracts with IPIC to provide a case worker to serve IMPACT clients at the Metro Center.
- *Noble Centers*. An agreement between the IPIC and the county Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (a sub-agency of FSSA) provides for staff at the Eastside Center to work with VRA job coaches to provide employment opportunities for their developmentally disabled clients.

In summary, the distinguishing characteristics of the Eastside Center and its sister One-Stops include: (l) center co-managers representing ES/UI and JTPA; (2) co-location of the core partners mandated by the DWD; (3) an emphasis on cultivating non-core partners, such as Family Social Service Agency, to strengthen the outreach capacity of the Center and enrich the services available to Center customers; (4) development of a system of linkages and referral networks through the involvement of a range of service provider partners, which may or may not be co-located; and (5) the continuing movement toward stronger local ties between the One-Stop initiative, and the School-to-Work and Welfare-to-Work initiatives. Local respondents noted that, while the local system continues to evolve and expand its range of partnerships, perhaps the weakest aspect of its current interagency partnerships is the lack of active involvement in One-Stop planning and service delivery by education agencies, including the school-to-work and vocational education systems.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Because there are three Centers within the county's One-Stop network, and because each of the Centers is co-managed by two organizations— the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and Goodwill Industries (the designated JTPA service provider)—communication and coordination among partners is viewed as an essential, if sometimes complex, component of the continuing evolution of the One-Stops. Levels of communication and coordination include: (1) communication within the Eastside Center; (2) coordination among Centers in the network, and (3) local-state communication. These are briefly described below:

Communication Among Eastside Center Staff. Communication is frequent and informal. Staff within the Center are organized into work teams, whose focus often changes over time to respond to changing issues relating to the operations of the Center. Both special work team meetings and periodic meetings of the different functional units within the Center typically involve employees from all partners. Meetings are guided by the designated Center facilitator who establishes the parameters for meetings, but does not lead group discussions. Meetings are envisioned as an opportunity for staff to discuss issues openly and to consider improved methods for provision of services. Since concerns discussed are often based on customer feedback, managers see this as a form of empowerment for employees and a way to make the Center more responsive to customers.

Communication and Coordination Among the Three Centers. DWD's One-Stop Program Director, who is responsible for coordination of efforts across the three Centers, convenes meetings of Center managers and cross-functional teams on a regular basis to discuss issues that affect all Centers. Early in the development of the three Centers, these meetings were held fairly often, but at the time of the site visit they were held about once every three months. Examples of topics discussed at these meetings include performance goals, the exchange of information across Centers, and the network-wide response to a large plant closure. The DWD Program Director and Center co-managers are trying to break down the sense of separation across Centers. Network-wide meetings are an important strategy for encouraging a sense of common goals and shared effort on behalf of local customers across the staff of the three Centers.

Communication Beyond Local Centers. Occasionally, the state calls "all-staff" meetings to share information on new directives or provide training on various subjects, such as use of new software being installed at the local level. State One-Stop team members also offer regional training meetings on topics such as teamwork and total quality management that have been well received by the staff of local Centers. Leadership from iNET and Goodwill have also called all-staff meetings when it has been appropriate to do so. Despite DWD's efforts, local respondents still see room for improvement in state–local communication. They believe that information-sharing meetings should be more frequent, particularly in light of planned staff cutbacks and state attempts to establish standards for One-Stop Centers. They also suggest that to facilitate the move to a One-Stop system, the state should "concentrate on the big picture," and allow local service delivery areas and Centers greater flexibility to develop systems to reflect local needs. At the same time, local respondents also understand the DWD's desire to ensure that there will be some uniformity across Centers. State capacity-building efforts, especially those related to technology and cross-training (described in more detail below), were seen as particularly helpful in this respect.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

One-Stop implementation grant funds have been an important catalyst in the development of integrated services at the three centers. More important, however, has been the development of cost-sharing arrangements that permit a variety of categorical funding streams to be used in concert to support center services. IPIC has also served as a broker in coordinating a variety of related workforce development initiatives.

One-Stop Implementation Grant Funds. IPIC was awarded $103,000 of the state's first-round One-Stop implementation funds through a competitive process. These funds were divided among the three Centers and were used to enhance Information Resource Areas through the purchase of books, videos, and software such as resume-writing programs. One-Stop funds were also used to support training for local staff in areas such as total quality management, communications skills, and the use of automated technologies. In addition, a sophisticated telephone system was installed to support information sharing and to further coordinate activities among the three Centers. The Westside Center also used much of its share for remodeling expenses at its new site.

In addition to funding received through the DOL One-Stop Implementation grant, IPIC also received a $350,000 DOL grant to become a "One-Stop Local Learning Lab." As laboratory (pilot) sites, IPIC and the Centers are expected to: (l) provide technical assistance and information to other states and local sites intending to develop their own One-Stops; (2) test methods for improving customer services; and (3) fund a wage and skill mobility study, which is intended to permit an in-depth look at the upward mobility potential of Central Indiana jobs. IPIC is planning to use the results from this study both as a way to market its services and, in conjunction with the local community college, to develop appropriate industry-focused training programs.

Cost Sharing Arrangements. Over the last several years DWD and the IPIC have entered into "integrated services contracts," in which the state and the PIC agree to exchange resources in payment for the shared costs of services provided to local One-Stop customers across all three centers. For example, during Program Year 1995, the integrated services contract called for DWD to pay IPIC $480,000 for its share of the integrated services costs incurred by IPIC. This payment included DWD's share of the cost of office space, telephones, and management and administrative costs paid by IPIC, and its fair share of the cost of customer services provided by IPIC staff. In turn, IPIC agreed to pay DWD approximately $130,000 for the JTPA share of costs incurred by DWD for the leases on two of the three Centers, as well as for shared costs of management and administration of the Centers and customer services provided by DWD staff. Under this agreement, IPIC also paid for a portion of the time of the DWD Program Director and local DWD office managers.

Although funding and cost sharing agreements are genuinely complex and require the trust and cooperation on the part of all parties involved to be successful, the cost-sharing agreements and procedures negotiated have been quite useful. For example, they have permitted local Center staff to develop integrated services without having to decide how to pay for integrated services on a center-by-center basis. Individual Center staff working across multiple functions and serving participants eligible for multiple programs are able to bill hours across multiple categorical programs based on how they actually spend their time. Although PIC respondents indicated that the Centers have been affected "only generally" by fiscal issues, they did express some frustration about the length of time it has sometimes taken to obtain approval for contractual agreements from DWD. DWD funding cuts in the form of staff reductions have also affected the Eastside Center's ability to serve customers, particularly at a time when Center usage by job seekers has significantly increased.

IPIC's Role as a Funding Broker. IPIC has also played an important role in brokering local funds for workforce development services throughout the community.

For example, it administers Youth Fair Chance funds which assist disadvantaged youth through local community-based organizations and the city school system. In addition to government funds, IPIC has also received grants from philanthropic organizations. The Rockefeller and Mott Foundations, for example, awarded IPIC a two-year grant of $800,000 to explore creative mechanisms to address the local service needs of welfare-dependent populations. Local respondents believe that this will become an increasingly important issue under welfare reform, which they anticipate will require counties to move welfare recipients rapidly into the local workforce.

DESIGN OF THE ONE STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

The One-Stop system in Indiana has evolved over a number of years, beginning with initiatives developed by the Governor's office to reduce the fragmentation of employment and training services and eliminate the resulting inefficiencies. In the early 1990s, about a half dozen "One-Stop Shopping" centers were developed in order to experiment with varying degrees of co-location of staff and integration of services. The decision to move the Eastside Center to a more spacious location in 1995 allowed DWD and IPIC to jointly test several approaches to One-Stop development including: (1) the design of a *process* for forming a One-Stop center; (2) configuration of a *space* which was appropriate for their vision of a One-Stop center; (3) testing of *new technologies*; and (4) development of a usable model for *staff integration*. In short, Eastside Center planners wanted to develop what they termed the workforce "Office of the Future." The One-Stop approach piloted at the Eastside Center also emphasizes the importance of involving a range of stakeholders in the planning and design of One-Stop services. Another important design principle is the development of a physical layout that is easy for customers to navigate. The physical layout, in particular, is a feature that has generated repeated positive comments from customers.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

The "Office of the Future" tries to base all design and service decisions on customer needs. As described below, this goal is reflected in the physical design of the Eastside Center, in which 65% of the space is allocated to client activities and only 35% to staff and management use, as well as in the organization and design of customer services, in which staff are thought of as "enablers" to help customers make informed decisions about accessing Center resources.

Universal Access

Several strategies are used to increase customer service access. The three centers in Marion County were located to be within a reasonable distance of all Indianapolis residents. Although the Eastside Center is located on the Eastern side of the city, it is served by regular bus service (largely as a result of Center leadership efforts) and offers free parking. Efforts by staff to arrange for extended office hours, to make the Center more accessible to working customers, have not been successful to date. Barriers have included the difficulty of scheduling staff to cover additional hours of operation. Moreover, computers are downloaded during off-hours and would, under those circumstances, not be available to center users. .

In the current tight labor market, service providers and employers are very interested in reaching out to youth and adults with barriers to employment. Goodwill Industries, the JTPA service provider, was selected to be iNET's JTPA service provider partially because of their experience in recruiting and serving youths and adults with barriers to employment, including low-income and minority residents. The Centers are in the process of developing outreach to under-served and high-need groups using linkages with neighborhood groups and organizations that serve these populations, as well as through the out-stationing of services to neighborhoods whose residents might be less likely to come in to one of the Centers. In addition, IPIC plans to promote universal access by providing labor market information through outstationed locations such as public libraries, schools, and shopping malls.

Many self-serve options have been developed at the Center to appeal to and better serve a broad customer base consisting of both experienced and less experienced job seekers. Without staff assistance, most customers can access labor market information, use self-guided instructional tools, and write resumes. To supplement the self-service menu, a wide range of staffed informational briefings and educational programs have been developed for the general public.

The Eastside Center also seeks to improve its accessibility to employers by providing them with a range of services geared to make posting jobs and interviewing job applicants simpler. Employers can now post their openings via fax or telephone and ample space is available at the Centers for employers to interview job applicants. The iNET provides additional services to employers through its employer account representatives, who offer specialized individualized services to employers who use the Center system. The IPIC also acts as an advocate for employers in its participation on local economic development committees as it attempts to assist in addressing area labor shortage issues.

Customer Choice

For individuals utilizing Center services, job seekers may receive an array of employment-related services at any of the three Centers. Once job seekers have been registered through the Centers' automated intake system, their records are available at any of the three network Centers, allowing them the choice of which Center to use.

Services at the Eastside Center are designed to support client choice, provide easy-to-access information about local workforce development resources, and make it easy for job seekers to use the resources available at the Center as well as elsewhere in the community. At the Center, customers using the Information Resource Area may access a range of employment-related information via electronic or hard-copy modes. The information and how it is presented is monitored constantly by staff whose goal is to make the information available and user-friendly. Customers may also access some automated services through the Internet, which provides job seekers access to America's Job Bank.

Another aspect of the strategy to support informed customer choice was to provide quality information on local and statewide education and training institutions via a "consumer report card." The development of this product had not progressed as rapidly as expected, and consumer report cards were not yet part of the services available to customers at the time of the site visit. Instead, descriptive information on local schools is available, both in hard-copy format and on the automated CHOICES career data base.

Integrated Services

Cross-training of staff and integration of services has been a management focus at the Eastside Center even prior to the move to its current location. Management is proud of the fact that "you can't tell which staff are paid by whom." Individuals can apply at the Eastside Center for services available through the following funding streams: ES, UI, Veterans Employment Services, JTPA Title IIA for adults, Title IIC for youth, and Title III for dislocated workers, and the Title V Older Worker Program. Currently individuals requesting services from the JOBS program for AFDC recipients or the Food Stamp Employment and Training program are referred to the Metro

Center, where FSSA staff are co-located. Referrals are also made for a range of other programs and supportive services available from other agencies and organizations.

Integrated service delivery at the Eastside Workforce Development Center is enhanced by the use of an automated common intake system. Center customers enter personal information directly into an integrated application system via a computer in the Information Resource Area. After being reviewed by staff, information is used to determine eligibility for the various programs available at the Center. Center staff have been cross-trained to provide a range of services and to be flexible in carrying out their duties. The goal of the Center is to provide "seamless" services to customers. Rather than being organized according to their categorical program or agency affiliation, Center staff are organized into three cross-agency and cross-program functional units: customer reception and intake, skills identification and development, and employer relations and placement.

Performance-Driven and Outcome-Based Measures

Indiana's Department of Workforce Development has developed a set of measurable One-Stop outcomes to be applied to each service delivery area in the state. Among the outcomes to be measured are: (1) Employment Outcomes; (2) Customer Outcomes; (3) Market Penetration; and (4) Usage of Self-Serve Services. In addition, the performance of One-Stop centers will be assessed with regard to customer satisfaction, usage, and office appearance. To maintain accountability, DWD state staff plan to visit Centers at least semi-annually; in addition, they intend to work with the state's One-Stop Advisory Council to make recommendations for system improvements.

Eastside Center planners and management are serious about using feedback from customer satisfaction information to plan modifications to services. As a part of its automated common intake system, the Eastside Center has developed an initial on-line customer response survey that asks users to comment on each service received. A one-page handwritten customer survey form is also available for customers who wish to provide detailed hand-written comments. A sample of customers using the Information Resource Area receive telephone calls asking them how satisfied they were with their experience. Judging from initial customer responses across these different vehicles for receiving customer feedback, the Eastside Center has achieved a high level of customer satisfaction.

Local program managers also raised additional issues with which they are wrestling in measuring performance outcomes. They are investigating ways to measure performance across the three Centers in iNET as well as for each Center. Challenges include developing ways to integrate new "One-Stop performance" measures with existing performance and reporting requirements across all the categorically funded programs offered at the Centers. This is a daunting task, because each funding source used within the One-Stops has its own mandated performance levels related to entered employment rates, wage levels, and retention rates. Therefore, measuring the success of the various programs in addition to overall customer satisfaction becomes a complex, time-consuming task.

Center and SDA leadership hope that eventually a more comprehensive system for measuring success in a One-Stop environment will be developed. This is particularly important since no *single* agency or organization is responsible for Center outcomes. For example, although Goodwill Industries is officially responsible for achieving JTPA outcomes at the iNET Centers, staff from all partner programs provide relevant services and influence outcomes. How this responsibility (as well as credit for the outcomes achieved) will be shared among the various partners is an important issue.

Physical Facilities

The evolution of the Eastside Center into a One-Stop center was given additional impetus when a new facility of over 15,000 square feet was leased in 1995. The interior was designed to provide ample space for current services, and more importantly, for additional core and supplementary partner agencies, for employers to conduct interviews and hold meetings, and for the development of customer-oriented services.

The layout was designed for ease of customer access. The space is on one floor, with a ramp for access by disabled customers at the front entrance. The layout of the public areas as well as the staff offices was carefully planned, but space is also "fluid," allowing for modifications to accommodate new or changing staff, or changes in the requirements of customers or employers. The design team determined that the office layout would be instrumental to developing the One-Stop concept and based its design on a distinction between three major activity areas: (1) a *client area* used for reception and intake, assisted self-help, and the provision of information to customers; (2) a *group area* for briefings, education and training, and employer seminars, with a "break room" for customers; and (3) an *individual service* area to accommodate staff work areas, individual employer interviews, telephone assistance, and special services. The client area is divided into a reception area, a job information center, and an information resource area.

As an indication of Eastside's "customer focus," respondents pointed to the fact that group and client service areas account for 65% of Center space, with the remaining 35% reserved for staff and management. The intake and client services areas are divided, not by walls, but by customer computer work stations, giving the large area an airy, open feeling. Reflecting a non-traditional and egalitarian spirit, management offices are located within the interior staff area, with "windows" consisting of glass panels facing the hallways. Eastside Center designers attempted with this layout to promote the notion that managers were accessible to staff and a part of the team; therefore, their offices also do not have doors (although their offices are a bit larger and their walls higher to provide some privacy for one-on-one discussions).

Several customers commented on the "feeling of the building,"—an open "airy" feeling—and staff think that one reason the Center serves an increasing number of customers is that the thoughtful use of space conveys the impression to customers that they are valued and that the Center and staff are there to help them.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

The staff at the Eastside Center consists of about a dozen each of JTPA, ES, and UI program employees, as well as several Veterans Employment Services representatives, complemented by a participant in the Title V Older Worker Program who serves as the Center "hostess." JTPA staff are employed by Goodwill Industries. ES, UI, and VETS staff are employees of the state Department of Workforce Development. Although Center staff each receive formal supervision from the manager of their own program (JTPA, ES, or UI), integrated planning and coordination of Center services takes place on a regular basis. Cross-functional teams from JTPA, ES, and UI programs meet regularly to work on ways to improve customer service, assisted in this by a supervisor who acts as facilitator.

Current staff assignments focus on duties that cut across program lines and stress the functional competencies that the various programs have in common. According to one key respondent: "The focus on customer service in the integrated services office must be real. The office design focuses on the customer, the job descriptions for staff focus on the customer, the work flow focuses on the customer." To make this guiding principle real, ES and UI staff, who have been cross-trained, are often rotated throughout most of the front-line office positions, including reception and intake, UI claims taking, and job matching. To protect customer confidentiality, staff may not have access to confidential customer files until they have received training in the area in question. As a result of cross-training and cross-staffing, services at the Eastside Center are now integrated to the point where customers cannot discern boundaries between different funding streams and the formal identification of services in terms of specific programs has been virtually eliminated.

To the extent possible, staff stay within their designated job classifications. However, DWD cutbacks have forced Center staff to be flexible, often undertaking multiple job duties on a given day. For example, a UI specialist may be trained to pre-screen JTPA applicants or assist customers in the Information Resource Area. Most JTPA staff working in the common intake and reception area are trained to check for UI eligibility or process UI claims. Last minute scheduling changes occur frequently, and although there is still some concern among staff that a certain task "is not my job" or that personnel policies and wages are different across staff employed by different agencies, these are no longer major problems at the Eastside Center. In an effort to reduce staff morale problems, for example, Goodwill Industries attempts to match the salaries and personnel policies for its Center staff to those of DWD staff.

Staff and management are concerned about the reduced Center staffing levels, particularly since participant numbers are increasing. They plan to continue to bring this issue forward to the state. These concerns are supported by many customer comments which have indicated that the "staff are great, but we need more of them."

Capacity Building

Training is seen as an important issue for both staff and management, particularly because several service provider and management changes have occurred at the local level within the past year. Training at the three Centers is expected to be continuous as new systems come on-line and new training needs are identified. In additional to training in the specific skill areas described below, respondents identified a great need for team and interpersonal training.

Training Initiated at the State Level. DWD's Program Development Unit, a part of the overall field operations/One-Stop management team also reporting to the DWD

Deputy Commissioner, has provided an initial round of training for One-Stop staff. Additional training sessions are scheduled. Subject areas in which training has been undertaken and is expected to continue are those related to Center integration and computer software use. Specifically, training areas include: (1) job function cross-training for ES, UI, and JTPA positions, as well as training in integrated reception and common intake procedures; (2) "refresher" training in UI, customer surveys, and "quality teamwork;" and (3) technology training including automated job matching and case management systems. DWD has also developed self-study guides as training tools, beginning with training for job counselors who work in the Information Resource Area. Trainees are encouraged to " job shadow" experienced counselors as a part of the training. Other self-study areas that can be selected by local employees as needed include basic communications, relationship building, and ethical standards.

Local One-Stop centers are also participating in the state's effort to identify and address gaps in the workplace competencies needed by One-Stop staff. Indiana was awarded a DOL Challenge Grant for capacity building that is being used to improve the relevance and applicability of training provided to state and local front line staff. The state has identified the specific competencies required by ES, UI, and JTPA staff working in a variety of functional areas, including supervision, business administration and management, interviewing, assessing, counseling, and training. In addition, special competencies have been identified for UI workers. After staff are assessed to determine the areas in which they are weakest, training will be provided in those areas.

Training Initiated at the Local Level. Locally, DWD staff involved with the iNET Centers have collaborated with Goodwill to develop a year-long training curriculum to be jointly delivered by DWD, Goodwill, and external training consultants. Included in this training package are about fifty potential "training matrix categories" covering a broad range of subjects. Modules targeted to all staff include "team building" training and technical training on the state's labor exchange and LMI systems and automated case management systems. Specialized modules have also been developed for specific functional areas including case management training for employees specialized in intensive services to individuals, job matching techniques for placement specialists, and employer relations for marketing specialists. Managers as well as team members are expected to attend these training sessions.

Eastside employees have found that the training completed so far has been extremely valuable, and has helped to make staff more flexible by breaking down many of the perceived "cultural" barriers that exist among staff within various programs. Eastside Center managers say that this flexibility has made it possible for them to serve the increasing number of individuals using the Center, especially as staffing reductions continue. Soft skills, such as those in the areas of interpersonal communications, team building, and total quality management, are currently considered a priority for enabling staff to function more effectively.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The state has been largely responsible for the various automated information systems implemented so far. Several systems are still in the planning process, while others are being upgraded. It is expected that these systems will continue to be developed over the next several years, as DWD modifies its systems to make them more suited to the new vision of One-Stop service delivery.

Under the single intake system, implemented by the DWD on a statewide basis, clients apply for UI and Wagner-Peyser-funded programs by entering their own personal information into the system, which then allows all partners access to the information. In addition, a number of SDAs—including IPIC—are electing to purchase and install the Automated Case Management System (ACMS)—initially piloted at several local sites including the Eastside Center. ACMS assists case managers in collecting client-level data and creating an individual service strategy (ISS) for JTPA-eligible clients. It also is useful in facilitating the preparation of required aggregate reports for the state DWD.

Customer outcome measures are currently collected through both automated and manual tracking systems, primarily at the point of service access. Information on program outcomes, including customer satisfaction, are reviewed first by Center staff and then by management. Customer responses have resulted in modifications to services at the Eastside as well as to changes in process-oriented policies at both the local and state level.

Improvements in Labor Market Information and Related Technology-Based Products

At the Eastside Center, the core technology-based tools for use by individual customers include:

- *ALEX Database*: Personal computers with the ALEX database offer Center customers access to jobs listed by local and statewide employers.

- *Internet Access to Career/Job Search Information*: The Eastside Center has piloted Internet access to America's Job Bank and America's Talent Bank.
- *Job Service Matching System (JSMS)*: This statewide system allows clients to begin the skills match and job-search processes by entering their own skill-related information, which is then matched with employer job orders.
- *CHOICES*: This career information delivery system provides information on career-related information and post-secondary educational institutions;
- *PC-based Resume-Writing Software*: Packages that assist customers with writing resumes are available at the Center.

Job seekers at the Eastside Center have enthusiastically embraced these systems, and their comments indicate that they are not intimidated by computer-based information systems or instructional materials. To the contrary, several customers have indicated that they "feel in charge" when they can enter their own personal information or do a job match search on the ALEX system. These local responses are consistent with the results of statewide surveys, which indicate that 94% of Indiana residents prefer using these self-assisted systems over the previous manual intake system, which often involved waiting in line for assistance. To further help the transition toward automated self-service, the Eastside Center has a "floating" employee who assists those who need help with the technology-based products.

Expanding the scope and quality of the labor market information provided through the One-Stops is a primary focus of DWD's continuing efforts. For example, the state is considering adapting North Carolina's "Human Resources Investment System" to make its automated labor market information products more user-friendly. In addition to working to improve the labor market and career information offered within the centers' Information Resource Areas, DWD is planning to make this information available to schools, libraries, and other locations through satellite access points.

ALEX kiosks have already been installed in 17 locations throughout the state, including Indianapolis. However, at present, much of the labor market information provided via ALEX at the Eastside Center is only moderately "user-friendly." It often requires trained staff to compile and interpret information on employers, wages, employment patterns, and area and state occupational trends, for this information to be useful to clients. Until a new system is developed and adapted for One-Stop use, a self-directed training guide has been developed by the DWD training unit to assist staff in developing their own local labor market information.

Consumer report cards have not yet been developed, and a career information project has been put on hold by the DWD for lack of funding. However, clients looking for information about schools may access information about careers, school locations, and financial aid in the information resource library. The computer-based CHOICES program also provides information on schools, careers, financial aid, and other education-related subjects.

Marketing

Marketing is viewed as critical to the success of the local One-Stop initiative for several reasons. IPIC, particularly the PIC board, has identified an need to improve the visibility and reputation of iNET among local employers. It wants employers to see iNET as providing useful services to employers seeking qualified workers. Other local partners view marketing as essential to increasing awareness of iNET Centers among potential job seekers and expanding One-Stop services through targeted outreach to low-income and minority neighborhoods. Thus, marketing efforts need to be targeted at both customer groups—job seekers and employers. At the PIC level, a marketing manager is charged with developing a marketing plan that will consolidate the outreach and marketing efforts of all local partners as well as coordinate local and state-level marketing efforts.

Marketing materials developed and disseminated at the Centers include "iNET Fact Sheets;" general brochures on Center services for job seekers and employers; targeted brochures on the services available to specific groups, such as seniors, veterans, dislocated workers, youth, and women; and published materials with job search tips (e.g. how to write a resume, how to dress for interviews).

Current state-level One-Stop marketing efforts were not well understood at the local level, nor were they viewed as particularly effective by local respondents. In coordinating state and local marketing efforts, center identification has emerged as a concern. At the state level, the Department of Workforce Development calls the Centers "Workforce Development Centers." At the local level, IPIC is anxious to raise the visibility of the three Marion County centers by promoting them as part of the iNET system. The integrated services agreement negotiated between IPIC and the

DWD expressly permits IPIC to use both the iNET name and logo and the state DWD logo in its marketing efforts. Center staff answer the telephone with "iNET Eastside Worforce Development Center," thus identifying themselves not only as part of the state's system of Workforce Development Centers, but also as part of the local iNET system.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

Services available to job-seeker customers at the Eastside Center consist of a mix of self- and staff-assisted computerized services and group and individual services. Upon entering the Center, job-seeker customers are generally divided into three basic groups depending upon how they identify their needs at the reception desk: new users, UI claimants, and repeat users. New users and UI claimants proceed through the common intake process, followed by the filing of a unemployment claim, if appropriate, and an introduction to the Information Resource Area. New users also attend an orientation session at which all the services available at the Center and in the community are described. New users may also be scheduled for a job training or employment counseling interview. Repeat users (or new users who are ready for this step) are directed to the service area in which they can address their interests or needs.

To supplement the *core technology-based products* available to the general public on a self-service basis or with some assistance from Center staff, *group services* available to job-seeker customers include:

- Testing of all types, including assessment, aptitude, and interest testing
- Training in job search-related topics, such as resume development and job club workshops.
- Special services, such as community informational sessions on child care, etc.

At the present time, the Center does not offer on-site training in basic educational skills, although Center classrooms are available to accommodate such services, if future partnerships with local educational service providers make on-site delivery possible.

Individualized or specialized services available to job-seeker customers include job counseling, individual assessments, individualized job referrals, etc. Specific services, all of which are available on a non-fee basis, include the following:

- *Facilitated labor exchange* including provision of information on the labor market and job openings, and arrangements for employer interviews when appropriate.
- *Information and referral* to other needed services through direct on-site contact with FSSA, Food Stamps, and the JOBS program (JOBS staff are available on-site only at the Metro Center; expansion to the Eastside Center is planned).
- *Authorization of vouchers* for those eligible for additional support services, and referral to vocational training and on-the-job training.
- *Development of individual service plans and the provision of case management support and referral* to other community organizations, for individuals eligible for JTPA services.

Services for Employer Customers

Employers may place their job listings with the Eastside Center via telephone or fax. They receive the following "core" services at no cost:

- *Ability to post job openings and receive computer-generated matches* with job seekers who have entered their descriptions into the automated system.
- *Staffed screening*, assessment, and referral of qualified job applicants.
- *Specialized applicant recruiting*, including on-site Center-based recruitment and screening of job applicants when large numbers of new hires are anticipated.
- Local *labor market, wage, and benefit information* for use in human resource planning.
- *Consultation* on unemployment insurance compensation.
- *Technical assistance* in applying for financial assistance to set up in-house training.
- *Central access* to graduates of job training programs, via iNET collaboration with training partners.
- *Customized downsizing assistance* including on-site workshops, employee counseling, labor market information, job search training, unemployment insurance, training and education programs.
- Assistance in meeting *affirmative action* requirements.

Some fee-based services are currently available to employers, and others are being explored. Development of additional fee-for-service options will depend upon the demand for these services and staff availability. Currently, the list of available or planned fee-based services that can be developed to meet specific employer needs includes: on-site customized assessment of job applicants, intensive job task analysis, customized analysis of labor market information (primarily for employers seeking to relocate), and specialized workshops.

In response to past complaints about the services available to employers, Eastside planners have introduced changes to reduce the time it takes to respond to employers' requests for job applicants and to increase the quality of the applicant pool matches. One innovation is that employers may now fax their job openings to centers, which helps to reduce response time. Eastside managers have also identified employer customers who might be willing to work with DWD to improve the current automated job-matching system.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

A focus group was held with a diverse group of individual customers, including several participants in dislocated worker programs, two participants in older worker programs, a training graduate, and an individual who had been fired from her job. These respondents were very enthusiastic about the services received at the Eastside Center, which they referred to as "iNET." Those who had received services under the "old" system indicated that there is now a "world of difference at the Eastside Center." Focus group participants said that they feel that they are treated with dignity and that staff seem to care about them, making certain that they "got what they came in for."

Several respondents stated that they have been pleasantly surprised by the appearance of the office and the range of services available at the Center. One woman mentioned that she most liked the fact that she could come in at eight in the morning, develop her own resume, and be ready for a job interview by nine. The feeling is that the new Center, because of its business-like staff and general atmosphere, is a "lift" to the spirits of individuals looking for work, and that they do not have to "park their dignity outside the door."

Several respondents mentioned that they had not known such a Center existed and that it is a "well-kept secret," wondering why it is not advertised more. They also indicated that it appeared to them that the Center is "short staffed." This has also been mentioned several times in the "on-line" customer responses provided directly to the Center by its customers.

Employers

Employer respondents participating in a focus group included a representative of a local utility, a temporary employment agency, and a local manufacturing firm. During the focus group, Center staff, who were also present, introduced a new "core" employer service which is being initiated by Goodwill. This is a "follow along" program in which Center staff employed by Goodwill Industries will follow new hires deemed "at-risk" in the job market for the first twelve months of employment, assisting those individuals to succeed at their new jobs. Employer representatives responded favorably to the idea of this service, particularly since they anticipated that, because of the low unemployment rate and new welfare reform requirements, they would be hiring more individuals with limited work skills, motivational skills, and pre-employment skills.

Several employers complained that too much time elapsed between the time a job order was placed and when job applicants appeared for an interview. They were aware that Center staff sent out post cards or telephoned potential applicants, but indicated that for each position posted they received only a handful of job seekers—to them, this indicated that the current pool of job seekers was not really serious about finding work and/or that currently employed workers were only looking for jobs paying above a predetermined wage rate.

Employer respondents also said that they would not object to fee-based services but their willingness to pay would depend upon the type of service provided. On the whole, the response was that they most valued working with a "case manager," someone willing to track their job order and personally work with them to find suitable applicants. Two employers indicated that they had identified such an individual at the Center and that this made a difference in the number of appropriate applicant responses they received.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

It appears that the future success of the Eastside Center will depend in large part on its ability to balance the needs of its two major customer groups—employers and job seekers. The design of the Eastside Center is heavily weighted in favor of providing job-seeking customers with efficient and seamless services, and to date, the degree to which individual job seekers use iNET services clearly outpaces employer use. The potential tension between employer and job-seeker priorities and their conflicting demands on the system are likely to become even more apparent as the IPIC promotes the Center as "employer-friendly" while Goodwill expands its efforts to involve more individuals with serious barriers to employment.

Funding cutbacks have also necessitated "doing more with less." Center managers have responded by initiating training efforts to accelerate the process of staff integration, but there is no doubt that these cuts have been detrimental and have been noted by customers, as reflected in customer feedback. Although customers indicate that staff are helpful and efficient, they have indicated that there is a need for additional Center staff to provide quality services in a timely manner.

The Eastside One-Stop Center clearly provides a useful model, not only for the state of Indiana but for other localities. It demonstrates that with careful planning and active involvement of a range of public and private stakeholders in design and oversight, a One-Stop center can lead to improved customer services even in a time of rapidly changing organizational structures, service designs, and funding levels. The Eastside Center also demonstrates that success can be facilitated by a long history of interagency coordination and service integration, the availability of ample physical space in a flexible layout, and the availability of high quality technology-based customer services and support systems.

The Center has been operating for just over a year at its present location and with its current configuration of service providers. Judging from customer responses and a dramatic increase in Center use by job seekers, its services are perceived as very useful. Individuals working at the Eastside exhibit pride in serving their customers and have been able to communicate this pride to clients. In the words of one job seeker, the Center is a place that "really juices you."

Although Center management and staff have accomplished many of their service goals, they face additional challenges during their second year of operation. The Center, up to this point, has been primarily oriented to developing responsive job-seeker services. As Goodwill Industries becomes more assimilated into the overall staff and management structure and makes its own contributions to the local vision of a One-Stop center, the culture of iNET and the Eastside Center will continue to change. This new culture will need to address the dynamics of the current labor market, in which employers will continue to recruit from among a largely unskilled pool of available workers. Thus, the overriding challenge faced by the Center will be to continue shaping Center services to meet job seekers' needs, while attracting and maintaining a loyal base of employer customers.

APPENDIX F

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER LAWRENCEBURG, INDIANA

One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During July 1996

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
LAWRENCEBURG, INDIANA
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 1/21/97

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
LAWRENCEBURG, INDIANA
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Workforce Development Center in Lawrenceburg is a designated One-Stop Center serving SDA 13, an eleven-county area of Southeastern Indiana. There are two other providers of workforce development services in the SDA—one is also a One-Stop Center, and the other is in the process of integrating its service delivery. Although this profile describes only the Lawrenceburg site, all three sites cooperate closely, exchanging information, coordinating common functions, and sharing supervisory staff.

Dearborn County, in which Lawrenceburg is located, has undergone major economic shifts during the past two decades. Once heavily dependent upon manufacturing, this semi-rural county now relies on retail trade to provide the majority of its residents with jobs.[1] Frequent and significant dislocations in the manufacturing sector drove the area unemployment rate over 10% in the late 1980s. It has since dropped significantly: official figures indicate that unemployment stands at about 6%. Popular perception, however, is that it is much lower.

The Lawrenceburg area has a history of coordination and cooperation among different workforce development agencies and programs that dates back more than a decade. Local collaboration efforts were encouraged and subsequently mandated by the state of Indiana, which has followed its own clear path toward consolidation of workforce development agencies at the state level. In response to state efforts to encourage local consolidation and coordination from 1985 on, as well as in response to local efforts to improve service delivery, local ES, UI, and JTPA providers moved into a common facility in Lawrenceburg in 1988. From the beginning, co-location has been accompanied by active cross-training of staff and integration of services. Rather than viewing the One-Stop initiative as a new model of how to organize workforce development services, Lawrenceburg partners see it as the culmination of a gradual and steady process of integration. The state recognizes that Lawrenceburg is one of the most integrated One-Stop systems in Indiana.

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[1] Although the manufacturing sector still employs 20% of county residents, there has been a decline of nearly 30% in manufacturing employment since 1985, when closer to 28% of county residents worked in the manufacturing sector.

Thus, at the outset of the state's One-Stop initiative, the Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center was already well-established as a One-Stop Center with significant integration of UI, ES, and JTPA services. Concurrent with the federal and state One-Stop initiatives, the Center has located to a new facility that is intended to support the inclusion of a broader range of workforce development partners, facilitate integrated intake across all partners, and provide a more professional atmosphere for One-Stop operations. In addition to continuing to expand local partnerships to include additional workforce development agencies and organizations, local staff are currently exploring how to make their menu of services more responsive to the needs of job seekers and employers. Staff have identified new labor market information products, self-service options, and employer-oriented services as key areas for improvement. Principles guiding the One-Stop activities in this local area include a commitment to customer satisfaction through continuous improvement efforts and an emphasis on ongoing staff development and training.

There are several contextual variables influencing the continued evolution and development of the One-Stop Center in Lawrenceburg. These include: (1) rapid economic growth and accompanying economic shifts during the past several years; (2) proximity to areas of economic growth in Kentucky and Ohio; and (3) state-directed efforts to overhaul the welfare system. These factors, external to the Center itself, will impact the environment within which the Lawrenceburg facility continues to evolve. Equally important to the continued development of local policy and service-delivery mechanisms, however, are three factors internal to the Lawrenceburg site. These include: (4) a long history of coordination between partner programs currently housed in the Center; (5) the presence of high-quality leadership at the Lawrenceburg site; and (6) a high level of attention to human resource issues throughout the transition to One Stop-service delivery. These factors are described below.

- *The local region is undergoing rapid economic growth.* Urban expansion has prompted rapid and significant growth in employment opportunities. Expanding jobs associated with the nearby airport, highway expansion, and the development of several large gambling casinos are offering low-skilled workers access to jobs at improved wages. Although the resulting labor market supports a high-volume labor exchange, it also makes it more difficult for Workforce Development Center staff to assist customers in planning for skills enhancement and long-term career development. Rather than pursuing gradual skills development and career planning, a number of individuals with limited skills are opting instead for entry-level jobs that offer an initial wage advantage even though they provide few opportunities for advancement. These labor market conditions have intensified the difficulties experienced by employers who are looking for stable long-term employees.

- *The Lawrenceburg Center serves the greater Cincinnati tri-state area.* The location of the Center in a multistate area where many workers cross state lines to go to work makes it important for staff to establish partnerships with out-of-state agencies and organizations in order to more effectively serve their customers. Several SDAs serving the tri-state area have begun coordinating their services and sharing labor market information. These partnerships are new, the innovation of a Lawrenceburg Center case manager, but they appear to be facilitating improved service delivery.

- *In July 1995, in advance of national welfare reform legislation, the state of Indiana mandated two-year time limits for welfare recipients enrolled in the state's welfare-to-work program (IMPACT).* Although the Center is not currently providing JOBS services to AFDC recipients, the state is interested in using an integrated workforce development delivery system to support welfare recipients in their transition to work. Thus, the Center is likely to be substantially affected by recent state-level welfare reform initiatives. Service providers face the challenge of assisting low-income job-seekers in developing adequate work-skills and finding work that will enable them to remain self-sufficient.

- *Partnerships between staff and supervisors of various programs and agencies have been developing for over a decade.* This coordination has rendered the shift to integration much easier than in other Indiana sites, where such partnerships were relatively new. Conflict between state-merit and non-merit employees, for example, has not emerged as a serious challenge, and most staff members could not recall a time when such tension was prevalent.

- *The local-level Program Director responsible for the Center's operations is balanced in her ability to provide leadership as well as encourage innovation and experimentation.* Center staff regularly contribute to the development of new policies and procedures, both informally, through intra-office networking, and formally, through regular brainstorming sessions called "roundtables." Employees are then encouraged to experiment with new ideas. The cross-state relationships that the Lawrenceburg site has developed with other SDAs, for example, was originally the idea of a Center staff person who was encouraged to pursue it.

- *Attention to investing in and supporting a high quality staff is a strong feature of the Lawrenceburg Center.* The vast majority of staff employed at the Center have been there for many years. They are committed to the concept of One-Stop, and more importantly, to high-quality customer service. All respondents emphasized the importance of ensuring that Center staff receive the resources they need to provide high quality services, including training, good communication networks, and the ability to influence workplace decisions.

ORGANIZATION & GOVERNANCE OF LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

The state of Indiana's plan for policy oversight of local One-Stop systems calls for increased coordination between Private Industry Councils (PICs)—which formally govern Center activities—and other local stakeholders.[2] Although the Indiana Association of Private Industry Council (PIC) Directors has lobbied the State for the authority to have JTPA PICs evolve into local Workforce Investment Boards, no final decision had been made regarding the designation of local governing boards at the time of the site visit.

Within the Southeastern Indiana SDA, the JTPA Private Industry Council has evolved from playing a narrow JTPA-related policy role to taking on broader oversight responsibility for the integrated workforce development services offered through local One-Stop Centers. Its incorporated administrative entity—River Valley Resources, Inc.—continues to deliver JTPA services directly. In the future, the PIC hopes to become more engaged in strategic planning and ongoing coordination between employers, job seekers, service providers, and economic development agencies, including local Chambers of Commerce.

Key agencies that participate in the Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center and employ staff housed in the Center include:

- *River Valley Resources*, the administrative entity for the 11-county JTPA Service Delivery Area, which has responsibility for JTPA Title II services for economically disadvantaged individuals as well as JTPA Title III services for dislocated workers;

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[2] Such stakeholders include local elected officials, economic development entities, educational institutions and organizations, county-based providers of social services, and other community-based organizations.

- *The Indiana Department of Workforce Development* (DWD), which is responsible for Wagner-Peyser (ES) services, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS), UI Profiling, Reemployment Services, JTPA, and Vocational and Technical Education Programs;
- *Green Thumb*, which is the local operator of Title V Older Worker programs;
- A representative from *Vocational Rehabilitation Services*, who is outstationed at the Center several days per week to provide services to eligible customers; and
- *Southeastern Career Center*, which supports a full-time on-site Adult Basic Education/GED instructor.

The fiscal agent for the Center as a whole, as well as for the One-Stop implementation grant funding, is River Valley Resources—the JTPA administrative entity. Formal oversight of all three workforce development centers in the SDA is the shared responsibility of the SDA Director (who is also the Executive Director of River Valley Resources) and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Program Director for the area. Within each Center, however, a single individual has been designated as the "functional supervisor" of all participating agency staff. For the Lawrenceburg Center, the DWD Program Director has been designated as the functional supervisor of all Center staff.

Although formal supervisory responsibility for staff remains with the agency that officially employs each individual, a formal written contract between the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and River Valley Resources clarifies the distinction between formal and functional supervision and makes it possible for Center staff to work together as part of a unified workforce development entity. As a result of this integrated administrative structure, formal agency affiliation does not determine Center staff roles and responsibilities. Rather, staff are organized by function across program lines, and individual staff frequently bill their time to more than one categorical funding stream.

Another agency with which the Center closely coordinates services is the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), which provides income support and child care assistance, and administers welfare-to-work services on behalf of public assistance recipients. FSSA occupies office space adjacent to the Center and shares a conference room and classroom space with Center staff. FSSA customers frequently use Center services, but the contractual agreement between the two agencies is limited to a leasing arrangement for office space and the sharing of staff who provide services to the customers of both agencies during special functions, such as job fairs.

Additional "non-core" partners with which the Center has developed referral linkages include the *U.S. Department of Agriculture's Women Infants and Children (WIC)* nutrition program; *Ivy Tech*, the local branch of the state's technical college system; county *Mental Health Services*; the *Small Business Development Center* in Madison, which offers entrepreneurial training courses and financial assistance to small businesses; *Southeast Indiana Economic Opportunities Corporation*, which operates *Head Start* and offers child care assistance; *Step Ahead*, which provides child care assistance and youth services; and *Transition Resources*, which provides services to migrant farmworkers. Center staff are interested in establishing or improving relationships with these organizations and others to improve customer access to needed services and minimize duplication of effort among local agencies. Thus far, however, coordination between the Center and these non-core partners has been informal in nature. Because Lawrenceburg is a fairly small town and has only a limited number of service providers, staff "just know" other providers of related social services.

Although the Center does not have any formal organizational structure for coordination with the state's school-to-work initiative, linkages with youth-serving agencies and institutions are also seen as key to meeting the objectives of the participating partners. Current efforts to support such linkages include active outreach into local high schools and technical schools, communication with teachers to enhance career education opportunities for students in grades 8 and 9, involvement in JTPA Summer Youth Employment Program activities, and participation in a juvenile justice program to assist youth offenders seeking employment or training opportunities.

In summary, the Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center has developed an organizational structure that permits it to integrate common functions, such as case management and job development, among participating partner agencies, as well as to coordinate closely with additional local agencies and organizations that have common or overlapping interests and client populations.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Staff of the Lawrenceburg Center hold regular meetings as well as interagency "roundtables" to address specific issues or brainstorm about improved services and outreach strategies. More important than the existence or frequency of such meetings is the degree to which they support the open informal communication that occurs regularly in the Lawrenceburg Center. Staff indicated that meetings tended to be forums for collective decision-making, but that regular communication takes place openly and constructively on a daily basis. Staff expressed the importance of informal communication to support formal capacity-building efforts.

Technology has also supported coordination and communication among local partners, as well as between the state and the Lawrenceburg Center. Locally, the Lawrenceburg office is part of a local area network (LAN) that includes the Madison and Richmond offices. This network has evolved over the past two years and has facilitated information sharing among and between staff and supervisors in all three local sites. The Lawrenceburg office is also a node for a wide area network (WAN) that has improved the local site's ability to communicate and coordinate services with the state through the sharing of data and case files. The Lawrenceburg office does not yet have regular electronic mail service, but staff are looking forward to installing this service in the near future.

A recent local initiative has been the development of cross-state relationships between SDAs intended to inform improved services to customers *region-wide*. Because large numbers of Lawrenceburg residents are employed out-of-state, local staff felt that such relationships would enable them to: (1) provide better services to their individual and employer customers; and (2) share information about, and experiences with, new workforce development initiatives. Such relationships with Kentucky SDAs have already proven valuable. Several representatives from nearby SDAs have recently visited the Lawrenceburg site to inform their own transformations to integrated services. The cross-state sites now share job orders and screen each other's candidates. They are interested in further coordination through technology, but since Indiana and Kentucky operate different information systems, the local sites are, for the time being, forced to rely on paper to share information.

Partnerships with Ohio SDAs are less well-developed: the Lawrenceburg office maintains applications for enrollment in the Ohio system, but does not actually screen for jobs or receive regular job orders. Coordination between local sites in the three states, however, seems to be increasing with the frequency of formal meetings and facility tours. Such efforts will provide job-seekers in all three states with access to better and more timely information about available jobs and training opportunities. The entire locally-driven effort to coordinate and communicate across state lines is representative of the general level of initiative and innovation that is typical of the Lawrenceburg site.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

Unlike many other local sites in Indiana the Lawrenceburg site is currently operating under a single integrated budget. Whereas issues involving lease arrangements and property ownership have been barriers to budget integration for most sites, Lawrenceburg was able to achieve this goal with relative ease because of two important factors.

First, the fiscal agent for the Lawrenceburg Center, River Valley Resources, administers the integrated services contract budgets for all three Centers in the SDA.[3] Because River Valley Resources has a dual role—both as administrative entity for local JTPA resources and as administrative staff to the local Private Industry Council responsible for overseeing the integration of workforce development services—it has been able to oversee resources from multiple sources.

Second, the core partners relocated to the new site as partners—they worked together to select the location, move in, and organize the space with the specific intent of integrating services. This process helped staff identify resources collectively rather than by program or agency. Several respondents from different programs remarked, "At this point, we cannot really imagine doing it any other way . . . if we had to separate again, it would be nearly impossible."

The Lawrenceburg One-Stop Center's budget is comprised of a number of funding sources:

- *Wagner-Peyser* funds support the functions formally associated with the Employment Service.
- *JTPA* funds support the assessment, career planning, and job training functions for eligible individuals.

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[3] The majority of Wagner-Peyser and UI resources are not included in the integrated services contracts but are overseen directly by the DWD Program Director.

- *Federal Unemployment Insurance* funds provide benefits for eligible unemployed workers.
- The *Family and Social Services Administration* budget pays for the office space it leases from the Workforce Development Center, and shares the cost of utilities and some common functions, such as reception for JOBS customers enrolling in the training programs.
- *Veterans Employment Service (VETS)* supports the equivalent of one-half of one salaried individual so that VETS services may be provided on-site.
- *Adult education* funds support an ABE/GED instructor who maintains a full-time presence at the Center.
- *Carl Perkins vocational education* funds support assessment and other services provided at the Center for participants enrolled in vocational education programs with partner institutions, such as Ivy Tech.
- The *One-Stop grant* funds awarded to the Center supported the establishment of the Center's Information Resource Area (IRA), which was collectively planned by the Center partners.[4]

Although their funds are not part of the integrated budget, *Green Thumb*, the administrator of Title V older workers funds, and *Vocational Rehabilitation* maintain a presence on-site through non-financial agreements with River Valley Resources and the Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

Collaboration between the various partners began over a decade ago and was supported and later mandated by the state of Indiana. As early as 1985, interdepartmental planning began at the state level, followed closely by a merging of the Indiana Office of Occupational Development (IOOD) and the Indiana Employment Security Division into a new Department of Employment and Training Services (DETS). Local-level service providers began to merge their functions at this time, reflecting the state-initiated change. The move toward integrated services gained momentum through these early changes. By 1990, the state was already beginning to struggle with the practical consequences of integrated services: committees were organized to develop a common intake process, self-driven systems, and other mechanisms that would support integration. The state sponsored a series of forums and summits on workforce development issues in which cross-agency staff participated. In 1991, realizing that a "paradigm shift" in the delivery of employment and training services was underway, the Governor issued an executive order combining the Department of Employment and Training (Wagner-Peyser, UI, and JTPA) with the Commission on Vocational and Technical Education, and the Office of Workforce Literacy to form the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). This structural reorganization supported statewide integration efforts. It was the intent of the state administration to review the mandate of DWD on an ongoing basis to support continuous improvement in providing workforce development services to Indiana job-seekers, workers, and employers.

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[4] The Lawrenceburg site received $20,496 out of the $120,000 in total grant funds awarded to the Southeastern Indiana SDA. These funds have thus far supported the purchase of hardware and software, furniture, and media (publications, videos, resource guides) for staff and customer use.

In Lawrenceburg, the UI, ES, and JTPA programs have been co-located in a single facility since 1988. Vocational Rehabilitation and Veterans' Services were also early collaborators in the integration of local workforce development services in Lawrenceburg, as was Green Thumb, the organization that administers Title V Older Workers' funds. As described previously, co-location of ES, UI, and JTPA staff evolved quickly into coordinated staff training and plans for integration of shared functions.

In January 1995 the Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center relocated to a new physical facility that was large enough to accommodate additional partners, as needed, and whose physical layout would support the development of shared functions, including a common intake area. At this time, the offices directly across the hall from the new Workforce Development Center were vacant, and Lawrenceburg staff hoped to recruit the welfare department as a neighbor. Six months after the Center was established at its new location, the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) did, in fact, lease the nearby available space.

Current One-Stop system development objectives include: (1) *formalizing relationships* with a broader set of community agency partners; (2) *developing a wider menu of services* designed to meet customer needs; and (3) *conducting outreach to both large and small employers*. Because the partners at the Lawrenceburg site have such a long history of collaboration and cooperation, and because Lawrenceburg has been moving toward integrated services incrementally for over a decade, most respondents had tremendous difficulty recalling their first steps in coming together. Moreover, since the evolutionary process had been so gradual, staff had trouble assessing the nature of services and relationships "before" and "after" One-Stop.

Although Center staff could not identify a single catalyst that prompted a rethinking of the means by which employment and training services were delivered, they did feel that the size of the staff and the "home-town" nature of the area served had a tremendous impact. First, everyone knows one another or at least knows *of* one another. This increases the accountability that local service providers feel because they often see their customers around town, in their neighborhoods, or in their children's schools. The personal lives of the Center staff are not as distinct from their professional lives, nor are staff as anonymous as they might be in a larger metropolitan area.

Second, precisely *because* personal and professional relationships overlap, staff of various agencies had been cooperating, communicating, and coordinating informally with each other long before such coordination was thought to support improved services. Local service providers cooperated because it rendered them more efficient in their work and more responsive to their customers.

Another factor promoting coordination of services has been financial need. Decreasing budgets have been a feature of public sector service work for at least the past decade. Out of necessity, local-level partners and cooperating agencies found it more efficient and cost-effective to share information and referrals and leverage resources than to remain entirely autonomous entities. This coordination lead to the recognition that many agencies had both overlapping job functions and parallel interests.

Although the state of Indiana has received considerable attention in its efforts to promote the One-Stop approach to service delivery, the staff of both the Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center and River Valley Resources see the evolution toward integrated services delivery as a *local* initiative, which has gained increasing support through parallel initiatives at the state and federal levels. Even though they appreciate the state One-Stop team's support in pursuing common objectives, they are concerned about maintaining a degree of autonomy sufficient to realize a local vision developed far in advance of the state's plan to integrate services in Workforce Development Centers across Indiana. Shifts in policy directives governing statewide One-Stop implementation, for example, are perceived as undermining the potential for local innovation by limiting the flexibility of the local sites to establish policies that meet the needs of the local populations.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Themes

Universal Access

In contrast to a number of local One-Stop Centers that view technology-based products, such as electronic databases on career and labor market information, as the key to providing universal access to One-Stop customers, the Lawrenceburg Center is struggling with how to revise its entire menu of services to make services meet the needs of a broader customer base. At issue are not only questions about how to provide good labor market information in a useful format, but how to make new and improved workshops and group activities accessible to a wider range of employer and job-seeker customers, without diluting the intensive services needed by individuals with greater employment barriers.

A major concern for Center staff is how to prepare to simultaneously serve two new and very different groups of job-seeker customers who are anticipated to grow in number: (1) more highly educated and experienced clientele and (2) individuals facing new time-limits on welfare benefits and are under pressure to find immediate employment. On the one hand, the Center is just beginning to develop new approaches to employer outreach and new ways to assist highly educated and experienced clientele in their job searches. On the other hand, the state's welfare customers are likely to be among those facing the most formidable employment barriers and requiring more intensive case management and job-readiness training. Staff are concerned about the Center's ability to conduct outreach and provide high-quality service to both groups of customers.

Another challenge in relation to universal access is the development of formal policies identifying the services available to various groups of customers. Currently, informal mechanisms exist through which the general public may access a limited number of services, workshops for example, designed for customers of categorical programs. Informal public access to such programs is granted on a space-available basis. However, as the Center markets its services to increasing numbers of non-traditional customers, as well as to new employer customers, access policies must be formalized.

To make the Center's services more accessible to customers, Lawrenceburg staff have begun to discuss the possibility of providing more flexible service hours. Currently, the Center is open from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, with the JTPA staff staying until 4:45 PM. Several individual staff members indicated that extended service hours might bring in a wider variety of customers—employed job-seekers looking for new opportunities, for example. Among the options being discussed are extended hours for all services and flex-hours for staff, or extended hours in the resource room only, with flex-hours for fewer staff.

Center staff are also concerned about how to make Center services attractive and accessible to an expanded group of local *employers*. Constraints on the Center's ability to address employer needs include the tight labor market, which severely limits the number of skilled and experienced workers who seek placement assistance from the Center. The degree to which the Lawrenceburg Center can engage in the development of new "value added" services for employers is, to some degree, contingent on the unemployment rate. The customers that the Center serves during high-growth periods typically face significant employment barriers. Providing high-quality services to employers under such conditions is more of a challenge than when there are large numbers of job-seekers. For example, the screening function of the hiring process is burdensome when an employer must screen large numbers of applicants. The Center could serve employers needs by assisting in this task. However, as the pool of job-seekers shrinks, Center staff are challenged to refer only *appropriately*-skilled job seekers to employers engaged in hiring. The rapid shift from low to high growth in the Lawrenceburg area has revealed that the ability to contract and expand service-delivery capacity is a significant challenge for the Lawrenceburg site.

Customer Choice

The Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center has negotiated a balance between self-driven and staff-guided systems both in the intake process and in the Information Resource Area. The Lawrenceburg staff had estimated that approximately half of its customers would feel comfortable using the electronic, self-prompted, common intake system to register for services. They have been pleasantly surprised that the vast majority of their customers use the system without problems. One strategy that has undoubtedly supported the success of self-driven registration is that the intake assistant, who maintains a presence in the intake room for the 25 busiest hours of the week, is a Title V (*Green Thumb*) participant. Currently, this staffperson can guide customers through the initial process, and she is participating in additional training that will enable her to provide more sophisticated assistance. Several staff remarked that the older age of the intake assistant tends to reduce customers' fear of the technology. "When they see her," stated one respondent, "they think that if she can do it, they can do it, too!"

The level of integration has served Lawrenceburg customers well by providing a flexible system that responds as they require assistance. Customers who require minimal guidance are permitted a great deal of latitude, particularly in the Information Resource Area, while customers requiring more assistance are able to receive it. The Lawrenceburg Center staff universally see self-driven services as a means of using staff time more efficiently. They do not see automation for as a panacea for providing high-quality services.

For customers enrolling in JTPA programs or interested in learning about local training providers, remote learning is becoming a more widely acknowledged alternative to classroom instruction. Although the local technical college, Ivy Tech, is very close to the Center, Southeastern Indiana residents are limited in their ability to access other community-based educational programs. In recent years, local officials have begun lobbying the state for a local community college. Technology, however, may help Lawrenceburg overcome the challenge of access to education and training opportunities. Many schools are just far away enough to be inconvenient for residents to attend. Remote learning options on the part of these educational institutions are expected to exponentially enhance the training options of Lawrenceburg residents. The Lawrenceburg Center is eager to facilitate this process, whether through JTPA or by providing timely and important information in the resource area.

The Lawrenceburg site has recently made Internet access available to its customers. Staff have also just begun to experiment with various browsers and search tools, and to encourage customers to search for the "home pages" of firms or industries in which they are interested. There is a concern among staff, however, that the demand for internet access will far outweigh the Center's capacity to provide it. They are, therefore, reluctant to engage in significant marketing of this service. Staff of the Workforce Development Center also envision libraries and schools providing the tools to allow students and job seekers to access the state's "web page," as well as *America's Job Bank*. As these institutions go on-line, they, too, will serve as points of access to Center services.

Integrated Services

The Lawrenceburg Center has achieved integration—all functions at the Center, with the exception of UI claims investigation and adjudication, are integrated. Because the Center has a substantial history of integrating operations, "turf boundaries" between programs are largely non-existent, and new services and Center activities are developed in response to community needs, rather than in response to program-specific initiatives.

A current focus of the Lawrenceburg staff is linking the Center's job search services to other community-based employment resources. Staff understand that a more coordinated, coherent outreach strategy—attending local job fairs, for example—would result not only in better, more timely services, but would also support local marketing efforts.

While "fee-for-service" arrangements for more intensive or "value-added" services are being discussed on the state-level, they have not yet emerged as an issue in Lawrenceburg. In part because of the tight labor market, many such services (electronic screening of resumes, for example) would not be relevant at this time. However, providing a forum through which employers can directly address the labor market of the future through youth programs, has tremendous appeal to employers who are desperately seeking reliable entry-level employees.

Performance-Driven/Outcome Based

The Lawrenceburg site takes a great deal of pride in its customer satisfaction survey results. The Lawrenceburg Center has ranked first in the state in customer satisfaction for the past three years, when collection of state-wide data began. The Center, rather than documenting progress on goals specific to the state-level One-Stop initiative, is more concerned with measuring overall performance over time. Staff perceive there to be a tension between achieving high placement rates and providing superior services. For example, if high placement rates are emphasized as part of a state accountability system, Center staff fear that it would lead local sites to maximize the number of placements made at the expense of service and placement quality and/or the provision of appropriate services to hard-to-serve customers.

Because of the enormous economic shifts the local area has experienced during the past decade, staff appreciate the connection between placement and unemployment rates. During low-growth periods, when placement rates are also likely to remain low, staff feel that they can perform a valuable service through public education and outreach designed to enhance *employability* among customers over time. They are concerned that such outcomes will not be reflected in performance measures currently under development.

Physical Facilities

The Lawrenceburg WDC is housed in an office building on the grounds of an old brewery, and is fairly centrally located. The partners had some concerns about locating a Center off of the main highway that passes through Lawrenceburg—there is no public transportation in the area, so a highway location would be easier for customers without access to automobiles. Because the brewery is one of the oldest and most well-known landmarks in the area, however, customers have had little trouble locating the Center. There is ample parking and some room for expansion of current office space.

The physical layout inside the Center is ideal for shared operations. When customers open the front door of the building, a door on the left allows access to the Family and Social Services Administration, and a door on the right brings them to the Center. There is a stand-alone America's Labor Exchange (ALEX) kiosk in the shared reception area, as well as restrooms, vending machines and extra seating. FSSA and Workforce Development share a conference room and classroom space.

Because the door to the Center itself is comprised entirely of clear glass, customers *see* the reception desk of the Center before they actually enter the Center. The desk is staffed by one of the rotating staffpersons and a Title V older worker who assists with the intake process. Customers are asked whether they have used the Center before and are directed accordingly. If they are new to the Center, they are asked to fill out a 3x5 card so that the reception person can do an initial assessment of the customer's needs and eligibility, and refer to the appropriate staff.

The customer then enters personal information into one of three PCs set up for common intake. Also in the reception area are a large TV/VCR and instructional videos, including an introduction to work readiness skills, job-search techniques, and interviewing tips. A PC near the information desk runs a screen saver identifying the services available at the Center. The room is neat, clean, professional, and comfortably arranged—customers have a choice of sitting in chairs near a window, or at round tables well-stocked with magazines and publications.

As customers finish the intake process, they are asked to take a number and have a seat until they are called to an information window. There are four information windows, but the number of open windows varies with customer demand. The information windows generally serve customers filing UI claims, but staff also make appointments for customers to attend various workshops, enroll in the assessment process, or meet with case managers. Customers also have open access to the Information Resource Area, which is just around the corner and is staffed by a Workforce Development employee on a full-time basis. Return customers check-in at the reception desk, where the staffperson pages the Center employee whom the customer has come to see. Customers are then usually escorted to the appropriate office, although regular customers who know where to go are permitted to seek services unescorted.

The Information Resource Area, around the corner and down the hall from reception, is a spacious, window-enclosed room with tables and chairs in the center, and various PCs and terminals on tables lining the walls. The atmosphere is pleasant, quiet and professional. The Lawrenceburg Center staff have spent the bulk of their One-Stop grant funds on furnishing and supplying the resource area, and are excited about its many potential uses.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

When the Lawrenceburg Center relocated to its current facility, the staff suggested that the office be organized by job-function rather than program identity. Current Center staff indicated that this arrangement has worked well for several reasons: (1) *Individual staffpersons have grown acquainted with the staff of other programs and have begun to see others as colleagues rather than employees of other agencies or departments.* This familiarity has bred a healthy camaraderie, rendered program identities increasingly invisible, and facilitated the evolution of a "seamless web of services." (2) *Staff from different programs have been able to support each other's efforts to cross-train because of their varying levels of expertise.* Center employees who now share the same office space benefit from each others' specific program knowledge. (3) *Staff have become increasingly efficient because there is less duplication of services.* In the job development function, in particular, staff share referrals and keep each other informed about their contact with employers, reducing the likelihood, for example, of more than one Center employee contacting the same employer about the same position. (4) *Staff members can better support each other in learning new technology, applications, procedures, etc. because they communicate the* *ways in which the new procedures will affect their jobs and programs.* Such cooperative learning strategies reduce the intimidation factor on the part of employees learning new skills or technologies.

The development of integrated staff assignments in the Lawrenceburg Center has evolved gradually over time and has been facilitated by the long tenure of most Center staff in their jobs. Job responsibilities have become more flexible as staff have been cross-trained in multiple programs and as Center operations have become more integrated across programs. Common job functions among most partner programs include: reception, assessment, case management, job development, and employer services. These comprise the functional departments/divisions in the Lawrenceburg WDC.

Although staff responsibilities are increasingly organized by functional rather than categorical program distinctions, staff are still required to keep track of what programs they are working on so that they can bill their hours to the correct program. Staff look forward to fiscal as well as the functional integration of programs sometime in the future, if and when integrated block grants replace categorical programs.

Finally, all staff pointed to the importance of rotating the front-line positions. The Lawrenceburg Center once supported a full-time receptionist, but the position was difficult to keep filled. During the interim periods, staff rotated to the front desk in order to keep it staffed at all times. This arrangement worked well, and staff realized the capacity-building benefits: working the reception desk, including answering the telephone, *requires a general knowledge of many different programs*. "Desk duty" has served as both a means of, and a reason for, continuous staff capacity-building (formal and informal) with regard to all of the programs and services available through the Center. Currently, everyone in the office—with the exception of the Program Director—works the front desk on a regular basis. In addition, staffing of the resource area is a rotating assignment.

Even in the case of partners representing programs with very specific mandates, such as the Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) representative, the Center has found innovative ways to include program staff in the planning and administration of workforce development services. The Veterans' representative in the Lawrenceburg Center has recently moved to half-time—the remainder of his time is devoted to case management and other office-wide responsibilities. This has allowed the Veterans' representative the opportunity to engage in cross-training, enabling him to perform any function in the office, while preserving and making more efficient the Veterans' program. If the office is assigned another VETS representative at some point in the future, similar arrangements will be made. Again, much of this flexibility lies in the approach of the Center staff to emergent challenges. When asked about the effect of One-Stop on services for Veterans, the Vet Rep responded, "My job is to serve Vets. That includes strategic planning on how to improve services to Vets . . . but if I work to improve services for *all* customers, I *am* working to improve services to Vets."

Capacity Building

Lawrenceburg Center staff were particularly appreciative of training provided by the state on new MIS procedures and systems, including an automated case management system, (described below). Overall, the state and local One-Stop partners agree that cross-training for One-Stop systems should be viewed broadly as developing staff's core competencies and identifying opportunities for skills transfer, rather than as "learning how to do someone else's job." The capacity-building framework developed by the state and supported by the Lawrenceburg Center also places a heavy emphasis on peer support and training as a means of sustaining skill development and moving toward integrated services.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Staff at the Lawrenceburg site generally perceive MIS issues on two different levels: (1) developing mechanisms for sharing, recording or reporting information that is required at the state or federal level; and (2) managing and sharing information locally. Lawrenceburg staff feel that the state should be responsible for the development of systems that fall in the former category, whereas the local sites should have the flexibility to select the applications most suited to their needs. As a result of this dual perspective, the challenges associated with MIS issues are perhaps less daunting than in other states. The Lawrenceburg Center is not prepared to wait until the state makes decisions about MIS issues, so its emphasis in identifying applications and systems that will fit its local needs is not on *comprehensiveness* (i.e., the ability of one system to do everything), but on *compatibility*. In general, the Lawrenceburg staff are neither overwhelmed nor "star-struck" by technology, but are pursuing a reasoned approach to using technology to enhance customer service.

The two technology-based innovations mentioned most frequently by staff as having facilitated coordination are the *common intake system* and the *Automated Case Management System (ACMS)*. The common intake procedure is a self-driven series of questions that enable customers to register for services when they first enter the Center. Although the system is self-driven, there are always two staff members in the waiting room who are ready to assist those customers who are not receptive to using technology. The system feeds information into customers' case files and enables them to receive services from any staff person with access to the case files. It has eliminated the "traveling paper file" as the primary means of managing information, and made intra-office communication better and more efficient. The intake system is not yet *Windows*-driven, but the staff expect the transition to *Windows* to occur soon. Moreover, the current system was developed with a view toward meeting the needs of staff managing programs administered by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA). With the addition of four questions to the current system, the same intake system could also serve as the intake system for FSSA. Lawrenceburg staff expects that such questions will be added as the current system is upgraded. This would support improved inter-agency cooperation and coordination between FSSA and DWD, as well as coordination within each agency.

The introduction of the ACMS system to Lawrenceburg—and to Indiana—was a local initiative. Several Center case managers were searching for a system, and, in 1994, saw a prototype used by an SDA in Maine. The Lawrenceburg Center worked with the state to bring in a consultant who would customize the system to meet Lawrenceburg's needs. The consultant spent a little over one year working with the system to make it function smoothly; staff training took another six months. At the time of the site visit, staff had been working with the system for a little over one year, and expressed a high level of satisfaction with it. Moreover, eleven of the sixteen SDAs in the state of Indiana have since adopted the same system; two other SDAs have adopted an alternative system; the remaining three SDAs have not allocated the capital required to hire technological expertise to develop and implement an ACMS package.

Although case managers at the Lawrenceburg site found the ACMS system tremendously useful, they were quite explicit about the fact that the ACMS is not a substitute for *human* case management.[5] They believe that the purpose of automation is to improve the ability of human case managers to do their jobs.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology

The Lawrenceburg Center is attempting to substantially reduce its dependence on paper. Although compatibility issues prohibit electronic delivery of out-of-state-job orders, local job orders can be found on an electronic database. Staff also maintain a binder that contains paper orders, but is looking forward to making the transition away from paper complete in the coming months. Customers seem quite comfortable with the electronic resources available to them in the IRA:

- *Automated job listings* are available to Center customers via the state's ALEX database on personal computers in the Information Resource Area (IRA) as well as at an on-site kiosk in the reception area. Listings are currently limited to in-state jobs, because of data incompatibility with *America's Job Bank*.
- *Choices*, a career information and interest assessment system, is also available in the Information Resource Area.
- *Internet access* is a new offering to Center customers, through a personal computer in the IRA running *Netscape* software. Staff are currently in the process of developing rules about the use of Internet services through the Center's computer. Customers familiar with Netscape are presently able to use it at will. Center staff plan to assist most customers in using the Internet resources as a tool for career and job information.

Additional computer-assisted services available to Center customers include a *key-driven resume maker*. A personal computer is also available to customers for word processing. *Multimedia* products are used for instructional purposes. For example, an instructional video available in the Center's reception area includes an introduction to work readiness skills, job-search techniques, and interviewing tips.

Both the PIC and the Center staff expressed a need for simple and more locally relevant labor market information (LMI), particularly as outreach to the schools becomes a regular part of Center activities. Staff indicated that the county-based LMI guide displayed in the IRA is out-dated by the time it goes to print, and is too heavily dependent upon projected census figures rather than actual information. It is also inadequate for border areas such as Lawrenceburg, where such large percentages of the population work outside the state. The PIC indicated that reliable LMI would also enable the regional economic development entities to better market the area to employers. Since the state is already collecting and disseminating such information, local staff generally perceive new product development in this area to be a state-level function.

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[5] In fact, the system is inappropriately named; it is not a case management system, but a case management *tracking* system.

Most Center staff and customers expressed support for the further development of technology-based products, although they expressed several concerns over the increased emphasis on automated products for the delivery of all services to customers. Staff expressed concerns that new labor market products would focus on the needs of highly skilled job-seekers at the expense of customers who face more serious barriers to employment; both Center staff and customers indicated that automated labor market information might not be sufficient to meet the needs of the Center's clientele. One respondent noted: "Serious job seekers already know who the employers are and other customers need more help than just access to automated information." Nevertheless, customers did feel that labor market information was important so that job seekers would understand how local jobs and industries are changing and what skills will be needed to enter different career areas.

As a result of these concerns, Center staff are working to develop a plan for combining automated and staffed services to meet the labor market information needs of Center customers. For example, seminars on the "changing nature of work" is a topic that Center staff have identified as of potential interest to a broad range of customers.

Marketing

Marketing Center services is an area that the partners acknowledge will require considerable effort. There also appears to be a need for increased communication between the state and the SDA in the area of marketing. The Indiana Department of Workforce Development has contracted a private-sector firm to develop new marketing materials for display in various Centers, schools, Chambers of Commerce, professional associations, and community-based organizations throughout the state. These materials are quite new and in the early stages of dissemination. At the same time, the state is encouraging local marketing efforts. Although some of the local partners in Lawrenceburg have seen samples of the state's materials, they were not involved in their development, and were unaware that the state had developed such materials as a part of a state-wide marketing effort.

One major marketing challenge for the state and local sites is the establishment of name recognition among members of the general public. Staff remarked that they have altered their telephone greeting three times in as many years, and it is still difficult to introduce themselves to employer and individual customers without identifying themselves as representing the "unemployment office." (They currently answer the phone with the name "Workforce Development.") Staff are aware that the Center's image needs upgrading and are attempting to overcome this problem through new relationships with local educational organizations and increased outreach to employers. Outreach to additional community partners is also viewed as an important part of a marketing strategy. In particular, in light of Indiana's welfare reform efforts, the Center is counting on its proximity to the Family and Social Services Administration to help make potential customers aware of its services.

Effective marketing to new employer customers is also viewed as a key challenge upon which future Center success will be dependent. Although Center staff have identified the need to reach out to private sector firms that have not previously used Center services, they are unsure how to develop an effective employer marketing initiative. Employer focus groups have been identified as one possible marketing activity.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

As customers enter the Center, they are asked whether they have used the Center before. If they are new to the Center they are asked to fill out a 3x5 card so that the reception person can do an initial assessment of the customer's needs and program eligibility and can direct the customer to the appropriate place. The customer then enters personal information into one of three personal computers set up for common intake. A personal computer near the information desk has a menu identifying the services available at the Center.

As customers finish this intake process, they are asked to take a number and have a seat until they are called to an information window. At the information windows, staff assist customers in filing UI claims, make appointments for customers to attend various workshops, enroll customers in the assessment process, or arrange a meeting with the customer's case manager. Customers also have open access to the nearby staffed resources area.

"Core" services currently available to all customers at the Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center include:

- *Access to job listings and job matching services* through ALEX and *America's Job Bank* using on-site terminals as well as a nearby kiosk. The *Jobs Information Center* (JIC) provides local job matching services. The Lawrenceburg site also provides assisted access to the Internet, and *America's Job Bank* on-line.[6]
- *Application for and receipt of UI benefits.*
- *Self-service access to labor market information*, through written and automated information in the resource area, and through referral to other local agencies.
- *Testing/assessment* for customers of all participating partner agencies may now refer individual customers to assessment through a battery of tests. At this time, the assessment process is not tailored to individual customer needs, but the battery is quite broad, covering customer interests, aptitudes, general basic skills, work-related basic skills, and personality traits.
- *Self-service career planning activities* within the Information Resource Area, including a CD-based program called ***Choices*** that describes different occupations, self-assessment software to practice and certify skills in typing and 10-key data entry, career planning videos, written career planning information for different occupations, and referral to information on starting a business.
- *Self-service job search training* activities within the Information Resource Area, including videos, written and automated job search materials, and use of resume preparation software. Resource area staff assist customers with resume preparation by reviewing and critiquing completed resumes.
- *Written information on local employers and training providers,* available in brochures and assorted materials within the resource area.

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[6] Services in the resources area are designed to accommodate visually and hearing impaired customers as well.

- *Access to on-site ABE/GED classes* offered 5 hours per day, 5 days per week by on full-time on-site instructor.
- *Referral to available community services*, including training resources and family support services.

One of the design issues that Center staff are considering is whether and how to offer a wider range of services to interested members of the general public.

Services currently reserved for particular target groups eligible for funding from categorical programs include:

- *Individual service planning, counseling, and case management services* for participants in programs reserved for UI profiles, dislocated workers, older workers, and JOBS/IMPACT and JTPA participants.
- *Group job search training/job clubs* for participants in a variety of categorical programs (i.e. Veterans, Vocational Rehabilitation Services).
- *Financial assistance and supportive services* for eligible participants in various Center programs, and for JOBS/IMPACT customers.

In addition, an ABE/GED instructor teaches on-site full-time. The teacher is employed by Southeastern Career Center in Versailles, Indiana, but teaches directly out of the shared space between the Lawrenceburg Center and FSSA. Both agencies refer clients to the courses. This arrangement has been popular among Center case managers, FSSA case managers, and more importantly, customers. The classes, which run on an open-enrollment basis, have been full (over 20 students each day) since last Fall.

In addition, Center staff refer customers to other community-based agencies offering more intensive family support services.

Services for Employer Customers

Although Center staff have long conducted regular employer outreach, they believe that they would benefit from updating their outreach methods. The services currently offered to employers are fairly traditional: job matching, referral, limited screening, some testing, and the provision of space for interviewing. Center staff have established good relationships with employers over the years, but recognize the need to expand services, particularly to new employers and small businesses for whom the services might be particularly appealing.

Among recent innovations in employer services, the development of informal "account representatives" and the involvement of employers in school outreach stand out as particularly effective. Although the Center has not officially designated "account representatives," staff do share information regularly and are aware of ongoing contact between the Center and various employers. Center employees have tried to minimize instances of different staff members contacting the same employer. Several staff persons also reported conducting informal polling among their regular employers to identify new services in which they might be interested.

School-to-work initiatives are increasingly popular among employers concerned about the future of their workforce. The Center staff felt that such interest is likely to be higher in Lawrenceburg than in more urban areas because local residents tend to maintain a high level of involvement in many school activities. Center staff have, therefore, begun to involve interested employers in school-based outreach activities.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

Individual respondents who participated in a focus group represented a cross-section of customers receiving a variety of services from the Center. They reported a high level of satisfaction with the services they received and felt that "personal contact and encouragement" was a strong feature of their experience. They agreed that the facilities had improved markedly over the previous several years, raising the overall level of professionalism among staff and customers alike.

It was difficult to gauge the degree to which the quality of services had changed over time because One-Stop-type reforms have been evolving for over a decade, and most customers had not received services more than once during that time. However, most participants expressed considerable surprise that such high-quality service was available through a government agency. One participant reported telling her spouse about a workshop in which she had participated. The spouse had been a participant in a dislocated worker program several years before, and when he realized that the workshop was held at the Workforce Development Center, he was shocked, responding, "You learned all *that* at the unemployment office?" He soon also visited the Center in search of a better job.

The individual customers all pointed out the need for improved marketing of Center services. Most had been referred to services through a friend, neighbor, or former participant. Although several were dislocated workers, they had been employed in small firms which did not receive "rapid response" services—they learned about the Center through their own personal networks.

Employers

Employers who participated in a focus group were generally pleased with the services they received and responded very favorably to the idea of Center "account representatives." Surprisingly, one of the services about which they spoke most favorably was the presence of an ABE/GED instructor on-site. Two employers reported that recent human resource policies have forced them to either seek only high school graduates, or to subject employees to basic skills tests on an annual basis. Since it is so difficult to keep employees, however, these human resource managers were resistant to placing additional (educational) barriers between themselves and their good employees. Referring employees to the ABE/GED classes for skills enhancement has allowed significant numbers of employees to retain their jobs, and employers to retain good employees.

Employers did, however, express frustration at the "trickle of applicants that comes in through Center referral." This is one reason for increased interest in school-to-work initiatives. Employers realize that the shortage of applicants is related to the decreasing local unemployment rate and the degree to which job-seekers have flocked to the new area casinos in search of new jobs, but they are interested in Center assistance in increasing the number of applicants nevertheless. Again, in general, employers expressed a high level of satisfaction with Center services, but it was difficult to gauge the change over time, since most representatives in the focus group had had little contact with the public employment services before the One-Stop initiative began.

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN/ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The move to integrated services began as a local initiative in Lawrenceburg. Because the state was engaged in parallel integration efforts, it allowed a great deal of latitude to the Lawrenceburg staff as it began to coordinate and co-locate programs, agencies, and services. According to Lawrenceburg staff, the early catalysts for integration included: (1) the threat of *diminishing resources;* (2) *changes in the local economy;* and (3) the *need for increased communication across state lines*. The One-

Stop funds directed to the Lawrenceburg facility, just over $20,000 in total,[7] supported the development of the resource area, but had no significant impact on the integration process. Among the factors that facilitated early stages of integration were the close personal relationships among staff of different programs and agencies and a common desire to provide better customer services, particularly because in a small city such as Lawrenceburg, customers are likely to be friends, neighbors, or relatives.

Staff at the Lawrenceburg site have experimented with various forms of organization and levels of integration, and enjoys the current arrangement, particularly the fact that the welfare agency is next door. The staffs of both agencies look forward to increasing cooperation and eventual integration, but feel that the state is lagging in its ability to support, approve or provide direction for new cross-agency initiatives.

The Lawrenceburg Workforce Development Center has developed a thoughtful and reasoned approach to improving workforce development services. There appears to be a broad-based genuine interest among staff in improved overall service delivery and an expanded menu of services. More importantly, staff recognize that the Center will continue evolving—there is a widespread understanding that continuous quality improvement is now a part of doing business. The strengths of the site as a whole include: (1) *high-quality communication, coordination, and integration* among staff representing partner agencies; (2) a *high level of energy and enthusiasm* among all staff about the Center's mission and objectives; and (3) a staff-wide *commitment to following through with local strategic plans*. Another impressive feature of the Center is its *balanced approach to the use of self-driven technologies*.

The Lawrenceburg site also faces many challenges. These are: (1) the *development and marketing of new services and products to employers*; (2) the *marketing of services and products to more highly-skilled job-seekers*; and (3) the *provision of services to large numbers of IMPACT clients* as a result of the State's welfare-to-work initiative. The Center appears to have developed a strong foundation upon which to address these challenges.

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[7] River Valley Resources was awarded One-Stop funds in the amount $126,452. These funds were allocated across the three workforce development centers in the region (Lawrenceburg, Madison, and Richmond) to support the development or improvement of Information Resource Areas.

APPENDIX G

STATE OF IOWA
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During May 1996

STATE OF IOWA
One-Stop Profile

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STATE OF IOWA
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The nation's farm crisis in the early and mid-1980s resulted in substantial dislocation among Iowa's farmers. Many of the affected individuals had been operating small family farms in rural areas and were unaccustomed to leaving their land to look for work. In order to conduct outreach to customers in need of support and assistance with reemployment, the employment and training community developed grassroots partnerships with ministries, health facilities, schools, and agricultural associations. In addition to widespread dislocation among farmers, nationwide economic shifts away from traditional manufacturing, the evolution of a more global labor market, and changes in the traditional workplace practices also prompted renewed interest in public workforce development services during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Because relatively large numbers of Iowa residents have been forced to seek assistance from state or federal programs during the last decade—as a result of economic shifts and natural disasters—there is a generally high level of support for public workforce development services.

The One-Stop initiative in Iowa has grown out of a broad effort, underway since the 1980s, to improve the quality and relevance of the workforce development services available to state residents. Another major objective of reform efforts has been to reduce costs by integrating administrative functions across multiple workforce development programs and coordinating the delivery of workforce development, economic development, and human services. The foundations for the development of the new workforce development system consist of an increasing consolidation of state programs and agencies and the creation of innovative partnerships among public agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector.

Following a blueprint laid out by the state legislature in welfare reform legislation in 1993, and confirmed in 1996 legislation that consolidates workforce development agencies at the state level, Iowa is pursuing a systemic transformation of workforce development services. Systemwide goals include creating a statewide network of local interagency workforce development centers, developing an integrated information system to facilitate interagency collaboration, and designing and delivering integrated services to center customers.

Although the state was in the early stages of implementation at the time of the site visit, significant progress had been made toward improving both the content of services available to customers and the means by which those services are delivered. Under the new system, all individuals—not just those eligible for particular categorical programs—will be eligible to receive services through the workforce development centers. The new centers will also be information-driven; that is, they will serve as local clearinghouses for information on all local employment, training, education, and supportive services in the areas they serve, and will provide access to quality labor market information relevant to other areas and other states. In an effort to promote local "ownership" of the workforce development centers, the state has required the individual centers to develop their own mission statements, consistent with the state vision, but tailored to local goals and conditions.

State-level respondents noted several factors that have spawned interest in reinventing workforce development services and continue to impact the evolution and development of the state design. These include (1) statewide demographic shifts, (2) shifts in employment and manufacturing trends, (3) overall reductions in state and federal revenues, and (4) efforts to implement welfare reform. Each of these are addressed briefly below.

- *Iowa's demographic profile has become more complex in recent years, resulting in different employment and training needs among Iowa residents.* Although overall population growth has been minimal, of particular concern are the increasing proportions of both older and younger residents as percentages of the total population. Currently, 25% of the state's population is under 18 years of age. More than 15% of the state's residents are over age 65; and more than 7% are 75 or older. Only Florida has a higher percentage of seniors. State policy makers fear that many Iowans of working age are moving out of the state to begin post-college careers or seek better career opportunities. One staff referred to the phenomenon as Iowa's "brain drain."

  Another changing feature of Iowa's demographic landscape is the increasing ethnic diversity of its urban areas. Although the state-wide population of 3 million residents is still fairly homogenous, workforce development staff in urban areas are serving increasing numbers of native Spanish-language speakers, as well as recent adult immigrants from other countries. This has impacted the nature and intensity of services required in Iowa's urban centers, and rendered overt the need for locally relevant employment and training services.

- *Shifts in the state's traditional economy have increased the demand for employment and training services in the state.* First, the percentage of residents employed in the agricultural sector has dropped by 30% during the last two decades. Second, although manufacturing remains fairly strong in Iowa, employment in that sector dropped dramatically between 1980 and 1985, and again in the early 1990s, despite slight growth in the state's overall population.[1] These structural changes have created a need to train the labor force for life-long employability, rather than just for specific jobs, and have revealed the need to promote a diversified economy.
- *Significant declines have occurred in the level of public resources available to support employment and training programs in recent years.* This has provided an incentive for staff at all levels to seek opportunities to share resources and find new ways to approach their business, including consolidating staff with common functions, automating some business processes, and developing strategies for fee-for-service arrangements.
- *Welfare reform in the state of Iowa has been ongoing for several years through Promise JOBS, the state's welfare-to-work program.* In part fueled by federal welfare reform efforts, there is currently strong support for state programs to assist families in moving from dependency to work. This will continue to impact the demand for employment and training services throughout the state. Of particular relevance, given this context, are services to assist customers in becoming job-ready and access to information about entry-level jobs.

  Welfare reform efforts are also driving the formation of new partnerships among public and community-based organizations at the state and local levels. Because welfare customers typically face non-training-related employment barriers, such as limited child care or transportation issues, increased coordination with the organizations that provide these services will promote improved workforce development program performance and improved customer outcomes.

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[1] Some of the decline in manufacturing employment from 1980 to 1985 was related to the decline in agriculture, since much of the manufacturing in Iowa was agriculture-related.

EVOLUTION AND DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of the State Design

Efforts to consolidate government programs and render state government more efficient began in 1986, when state officials responded to a growing feeling that state and federal governments had created a maze of independent social programs whose bureaucracies had grown overly cumbersome. During that year, Iowa instituted major governmental reforms—state-level commissions and agencies were consolidated and the number of state departments was reduced by one-third. The government reform movement also began to impact employment and training programs directly with the implementation of a state welfare-to-work initiative involving the development of new partnerships between the Departments of Human Services, Employment Services, and Economic Development. As a result, the public employment and training communities and human resource agencies began working together to address common concerns.

In 1989, the governor established an advisory group—called Target Alliance—made up of representatives of labor, business, education and government to (1) assess the state of workforce development services in the state; (2) gather information about the employment and training needs of individual and employer customers in Iowa; and (3) develop recommendations for improved integration of public services. Among the trends that the Alliance identified were:

- an increased use of technology, resulting in changes in the way Iowa firms do business;
- increased evidence of non-traditional practices in the workplace, including the use of temporary or contract labor; and
- an increasing gap between the skills of the current workforce and the skills demanded by employers.

The Alliance submitted its findings to the state with an overall recommendation that state-level agencies be more attentive to horizontal connections between agencies, departments, and programs. A report entitled, "Iowa Workforce 2010" grew out of the efforts of the Target Alliance. It was widely publicized throughout the state and generated considerable grassroots interest in workforce development issues.

Based on the work of the Alliance, a committee representing six state departments[2] developed a list of recommendations. The five recommendations included (1) establishing a workforce development council to oversee all programs; (2) creating local interagency workforce development centers; (3) developing an integrated information system to facilitate interagency coordination; (4) working across agencies to influence federal regulations that inhibit collaboration; and (5) appointing a coordinator to oversee statewide workforce development reform efforts.

These recommendations were incorporated into the 1993 *Iowa Invests* legislation aimed at creating a comprehensive human resources investment policy throughout the state. The legislation mandated cross-agency partnerships in education and employment and training initiatives. The Council on Human Investment created by the Iowa Invests legislation in 1993 is responsible for providing policy oversight to the broad initiative to integrate human resources funds and programs and for establishing overall state objectives and benchmarks for the three goals of workforce development, economic development, and building strong families.

In 1994 the governor created a separate Workforce Development Council through executive order—with representation from business, labor, state agencies and secondary/post-secondary education institutions—to guide the transformation of workforce development services and oversee the creation of interagency workforce development centers. The availability of the federal One-Stop implementation grants provided an incentive for Workforce Development Council and state agencies to accelerate plans to implement the transformed workforce delivery systems at the state and local levels. As described in more detail under Organization and Governance, below, the first year One-Stop implementation efforts were accompanied by another major reorganization of state agencies to bring a number of relevant programs under the umbrella of a new state department, called the Iowa Department of Workforce Development.

The mission of the Iowa Workforce Development Council is to further a high performance Iowa workforce and high performance workplaces as well as a high standard of living for all Iowans. The One-Stop initiative is perceived as the "system-building" effort to prepare for the delivery of improved services to state residents. The state of Iowa perceives its One-Stop initiative as closely linked to broader reforms of state government, as well as to educational reform and welfare reform. The One-Stop initiative is one means through which Iowa hopes to meet the workforce development needs of the 21st century.

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[2] These included: the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Education, the Department of Elder Affairs, the Department of Employment Services, the Department of Human Rights and the Department of Human Services.

State-level staff envision a system of local workforce development centers that offer access to all education, employment, and training services in their local areas, as well as to career information and labor market information. To qualify as a workforce development center, a local site must have a *single identity, joint administration* by a management team or designated center director, offer a set of required *core services* in a *customer-friendly facility* that is accessible and uses a unified and seamless process to make services available to customers. Workforce development centers are envisioned as having multiple electronic points of customer access for information and services including libraries, schools, community colleges, universities, and home computers via modem. Moreover, since many centers have already established quality linkages with local community based organizations and providers of social services, state staff members are confident that local sites will be able to successfully market their services to job-seekers, employer customers, and students and seekers of career information.

The state also envisions a close relationship between educational institutions in Iowa and the public workforce development agencies responsible for ES, UI, JTPA, Vocational Rehabilitation, and welfare-to-work services. This relationship will be supported in at least two ways. First, the community colleges in Iowa will serve as the community link to the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), a statewide fiber optics network that supports two-way information and data transmission throughout the state. As such, they will be able to support long-distance learning and training opportunities for Iowa residents by serving as points of access for courses and training programs offered through other colleges and delivered over the fiber-optic network. Second, in many local areas, the community colleges are expected to be actively involved in providing services—ranging from assessment to customized training—to individual and employer customers of workforce development centers.[3]

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[3] In most local service areas in Iowa, JTPA administrative entities are local community colleges. This was not true in the two local sites visited for this study. In one of the local areas visited for the evaluation, workforce development agency staff perceived the local community college as a full partner in the local One-Stop initiative. However, in the other local site, workforce development staff from the

Because Iowa was early in the One-Stop implementation process at the time of our visit, many changes were occurring at the state level. During the first year of One-Stop implementation, the state was concentrating much of its effort on plans for establishing a new consolidated Department of Workforce Development (which started up operations on July 1, 1996). To support local workforce development center implementation, state-level staff were also undertaking system development efforts in the following areas:

- Creating a business plan to support the design and delivery of services to customers at local workforce development centers.
- Developing an integrated information system to support the reporting and accountability functions for a consolidated workforce development system.
- Promoting coordination between the One-Stop, welfare reform, and school-to-work initiatives at the state level.

According to the state's plan, during the first year of One-Stop implementation, local sites were granted substantial discretion to begin the development of detailed designs for workforce development centers and the delivery of local services so long as they conformed to the overall state vision. Further articulation of local delivery systems, including the formation of local policy boards and the implementation of locally-driven processes to select service providers, was to be the primary focus during the second year of implementation.

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

State-level staff recognize that implementing the principle of universal access is a challenge. Ultimately, Iowa seeks to attract a broader customer base for workforce development center services, including students seeking career information, job-changers seeking new opportunities, and employers seeking a wider variety of services (e.g., referral, screening, and testing of job applicants). However few of the local One-Stop sites have yet had the opportunity to test strategies for promoting their services beyond the individual job-seeker customer base traditionally served by each of their partner agencies. Some state-level respondents expressed uncertainty about

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ES/UI and JTPA programs were afraid that the community college might decide to compete with them for designation as the local workforce development center operator.

whether the career centers would be able to successfully serve their traditional customer base as well as new customer groups, particularly in a resource-scarce environment.

To make workforce development services accessible throughout rural areas, some One-Stop centers have made arrangements for center staff to travel on a regular basis to satellite service sites operated by One-Stop partners or coordinating social service agencies. Customers can thus access workforce development services at sites close to their homes, rather than having to travel to the One-Stop center itself. The availability of information services via remote terminals or Internet access will also make services more accessible to customers in dispersed rural locations. However, although information technology will make some services accessible at a distance, staff acknowledged that many customers still want personal contact with agency staff.

Customer Choice

The state has emphasized customer choice in two primary areas: (1) new products for customer use; and (2) expanded access points for center products and services.

The state of Iowa has invested heavily in the development of self-service products for use in the resource rooms of workforce development centers state-wide. Although many of these products are related to core services that the public employment and training agencies have always provided, new automated products allow customers to explore career and employment options at their leisure, rather than having to make an appointment with an agency representative.[4]

The number of points of access for workforce development services has also increased dramatically. Customer with home computers, for example, may access the state's Data Center through a modem, or they may access the state's World Wide Web site from local libraries, universities, or from any home or institution with access to the Internet. There are also several stand-alone kiosks throughout the state that run a touch-screen version of ALEX (America's Labor Exchange) to which customers have convenient access.

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[4] For example, Iowa CHOICES is a CD-driven program that provides customers with information on various career areas and the skills needed to pursue careers in each area.

Integrated Services

Iowa seeks to lead by example in its efforts to integrate a wide variety of agencies, departments, and programs under an integrated state department of Workforce Development. At the local level, the state has mandated that the following programs be participants in all of the state's workforce development centers. Co-location is highly recommended, though not required for these programs:

- JTPA Titles II&III
- Employment Service
- Veterans Employment Services
- Senior Community Service Employment Programs (Title V of the Older Americans Act)
- Unemployment Insurance
- Food Stamps Employment and Training Program
- Promise JOBS
- Vocational Rehabilitation.

Local sites are also encouraged to include non-mandatory programs such as Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers and the Indian and Native American Program.

The state has also strongly encouraged staff at each center to work toward the functional integration of services. Local sites are required to develop joint administrative processes and governance arrangements at local centers. The state's guidance to local areas calls for integrated delivery of basic services including reception, orientation, assessment, and access to career information. It is expected that technology will facilitate the integration of programs and services by providing all customers with new ways to access services and supporting an integrated information system with the information needed for individual program-based reporting requirements.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

A state-level One-Stop Performance Management Committee has the responsibility of developing performance measures that will support shared accountability for outcomes among the partners in the local workforce development centers. The Committee has solicited input from local centers and is coordinating its activities with the Iowa Council on Human Investment (which is responsible for measuring goal attainment for the state's human resources investment system as a whole). The Committee seeks to develop measures that (1) promote shared accountability among partners, (2) demand little time or effort on the part of local staff; (3) balance the needs of local sites with the needs of the state-level administrators, and (4) support system-wide continuous quality improvement strategies.

On the basis of these initiatives, the state has developed guidelines for the development of local performance measures for the workforce development centers. As part of this effort, the Committee has identified seven areas in which the development of specific measurements is required. Each of these is described below.

- *Equity and Access.* To ensure that services are provided equitably to individuals and employers, the committee has identified a wide range of customer characteristics—including race, socioeconomic status, gender, age, and education-level—that will be measured to ensure that groups of individuals are receiving services in proportion to their representation in local communities. A similar set of characteristics—including size and industry represented—have been identified to ensure equitable representation of different groups of employer customers.
- *Outcomes/Outputs.* The Performance Measurement Committee has recommended that the units of services provided be measured and compared to the impact of programs on communities to assess program effectiveness and inform continuous improvement processes.
- *Program Management.* The Committee has recommended that program management performance measures be established at the local level so that they will be consistent with local objectives.
- *Customer Value.* The Committee has recommended that a variety of customer feedback mechanisms, including surveys and focus groups, be implemented in order to determine how customers value the services they receive and how satisfied they are with the manner in which they receive them. This information will be compared to the economic cost of the services and used to inform continuous improvement efforts.
- *Community Value.* Although the Committee has not yet developed specific recommendations, it has suggested that performance measures be established to gauge the quality and value of the workforce development centers in relation to other community initiatives, such as economic development.
- *Analysis.* The Committee has recommended that specific methods of statistical analysis be developed and implemented to identify best practices and inform continuous improvement efforts.

- *Return on Investment.* The committee has recommended that the concept of return on investment be used to measure the effectiveness of the new system over time, but it has not identified specific indicators under this standard.

Although the committee has suggested specific measures under each category, at the time of the evaluation site visit, final decisions had not yet been made about whether or how to implement the Committee's suggestions.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

Governance Structure. As described above, the Council on Human Investment, created as part of the "Iowa Invests" legislation in 1993, is responsible for overseeing broad state human service policy, setting program priorities, and measuring progress against the three goals of workforce development, economic development, and stronger families. Although the Council on Human Investment is not directly involved in the oversight of the One-Stop initiative, One-Stop planners and policymakers are being careful to conform to the overall policy goals established by this Council. More detailed coordination is occurring between the workforce development system and the Council on Human Investment regarding the design of specific One-Stop features, such as performance measures, the development of a technology infrastructure, and the design of integrated information and reporting systems.

The state Workforce Development Council (WDC)—created by executive order of the governor in 1994 and formalized by the 1996 state legislation that created a consolidated Iowa Workforce Development agency at the state level—is the state-level advisory board for employment and training services in Iowa. The sixteen members of the Workforce Development Council include four representatives each from business, labor, state agencies, and secondary/post-secondary education. The WDC is responsible for coordinating workforce development services and agencies, setting priorities, and identifying strategies that will further its mission of promoting a high-performance Iowa workforce, high performance workplaces, and a high standard of living for all Iowans. The Workforce Development Council is responsible for approving major aspects of One-Stop system design, including state workforce development plans and budgets, plans for integration of workforce development services under the One-Stop initiative, and the designation of local service areas.

Formal oversight of specific categorical programs is provided by subcommittees of the WDC.

The early stages of the state Workforce Development planning process in Iowa were clearly based on a model of broad interagency collaboration. Over six major state agencies with responsibilities for workforce development programs were involved in collaborative One-Stop planning efforts. The State Workforce Development Coordinator was selected for his experience and expertise in coordinating interagency relations. Interagency work teams comprised of JTPA and Department of Employment Services staff were created to implement reforms in education and employment and training services consistent with the state's new Workforce Development legislation. These teams included: the Center Guidelines and Implementation Team, the Marketing Team, the Labor Market Information Team, the Iowa Management Information Systems Team, the Capacity Building Team, and the Communications Team.

As implementation plans have matured, however, the state-level organizational model for the workforce development system has shifted from an emphasis on interagency collaboration to an emphasis on state agency consolidation, with a new Department of Workforce Development emerging as the lead agency responsible for One-Stop planning and implementation. State legislation passed during the 1995-96 legislative session called for a major governmental reorganization (effective July 1, 1996) that merged workforce development programs from the departments of Economic Development, Employment Services, and Human Rights under the new consolidated Iowa Department of Workforce Development. Programs administered by the new agency include JTPA Titles II and III, Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Employment Services, and a state-funded Volunteer Mentor Program.

At the time of the evaluation site visit, it was not yet apparent how this organizational change would affect the level and type of participation in One-Stop planning by the state agencies and programs not initially included within the consolidated workforce development department. Additional state-level agencies involved as partners in planning for the One-Stop workforce development system both before and after the creation of the consolidated Department of Workforce Development include the following:

- *The Department of Human Services* is responsible for public assistance and welfare-to-work programs. This agency has a long history of collaboration with workforce development agencies. Since 1986, the

Department of Human Resources has contracted with the workforce development system, including both ES and JTPA providers, for the delivery of employment-related services to AFDC recipients under the state's Promise JOBS program. This was not expected to change dramatically under federal welfare reform legislation.

In one workforce development center under development in Iowa, local DHR staff will be fully co-located at the workforce development center and will share reception and child care services with other center partners. In other local service areas, DHR income maintenance workers are not co-located at workforce development centers.

- *The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation* (a division within the state Department of Education) is one of three partners in Iowa's local workforce development centers—together with the Department of Workforce Development and the local community college system. Although VR can benefit from closer coordination with other workforce development partners and vice versa, VR staff are hampered in their ability to integrate services with other partners by categorical funding requirements. The state VR spokesperson explained, "We can only work with disabled individuals."
- *The Iowa Department of Education* oversees both primary and secondary education, the community college system, adult education programs, Carl Perkins vocational education programs, and business and industry services to private employers. The Department of Education is interested in how workforce development centers can coordinate with the school-to-work initiative in making use of electronic tools for career education and well as in involving employers.

A newly established Workforce Development Project Office played a key role in state-level planning and administration of the One-Stop initiative at the time of the site visit. The project office was established in April 1996 for the purpose of coordinating the various initiatives in which the Department of Workforce Development is involved. The staff assigned to this office—recruited from a number of different state agency partners—serve as the implementation or "system-building" arm for the seven state-level transition committees. The Project Office works closely with two additional entities—the Management Team and the Project Planning Team. The responsibilities of each of these entities are described below.

- *The Workforce Development Project Office* is responsible for overall coordination of various tasks associated with the consolidation of state administrative functions and the integration of services provided at local workforce development centers. As part of an overall effort to make the new Department of Workforce Development's operations effective and efficient, the Project Office has also been charged with eliminating overlap, preventing duplication of effort, and systematizing ongoing operations using the state's business plan. Staff of this office serve as liaisons between the seven transition committees, the Management Team, and the Project Planning Team.

At the time of the site visit, the staff within the Workforce Development Project Office had divided into two planning teams to undertake two major tasks. The "business plan" team was responsible for refining a business process analysis of tasks associated with the design and delivery of workforce development services developed by an outside contractor. As part of the business plan, the state is developing a matrix identifying the different "lines of business" associated with workforce development services. This framework is being used to guide local areas in developing and planning for the integration of One-Stop services.

The "information systems" team was responsible for overseeing the state's involvement in the development of a common intake system, and an integrated case management/program management system.

- *The Management Team* comprises the Director of the new Department of Workforce Development, as well as the directors of each of the five divisions in the new Department—Policy, Customer and Administrative Services, Workforce Development Center Administration, Job Insurance, and Research and Information. This team is responsible for implementing workforce development policy, setting priorities, and providing general direction to the Project Office.
- *The Project Planning Team* is a temporary work team charged with identifying specific needs and developing requests for proposals to solicit outside vendors to meet those needs. Outside vendors have been solicited to (1) assist in the development of a common intake system, (2) establish a state-wide workforce development electronic network, and (3) develop a uniform data collection and reporting system or an interface between preexisting systems. The Project Planning Team coordinates closely with the Management Team and the Workforce Development Project Office. Once a process is in place for selecting all needed vendors, the Project Planning Team will be dissolved and the Project Office will absorb any remaining responsibilities.

State Framework for Local Governance

The state framework for local governance of One-Stop workforce development centers was still in the process of development at the time of the evaluation site visit. The 1996 legislation that created a consolidated Workforce Development Department and formalized the structure of the state's Workforce Development Council also called for the creation of local workforce development boards, with representatives—from business, labor, elected officials, and educational institutions—appointed by the governor. As described in the legislation, the function of local workforce development boards will be to identify local workforce development needs, advise the state Department of Workforce Development and the state Council on the selection of local service providers and help monitor the performance of local workforce development center operators. These boards had not yet been constituted at the time of the site visit.

The state envisions a statewide workforce development system with "state leadership and local ownership." Although individual centers are encouraged to develop programs and delivery systems that best meet the needs of their local communities, the state has taken an active role in both planning and implementing these centers. The state is involved in (1) assisting local areas in developing workforce development center plans; (2) setting the criteria centers must meet to achieve "Workforce Development Center" status; (3) addressing the capacity-building needs of the local sites; (4) identifying state performance measures; and (5) providing technical assistance during the transition process.

To meet the state requirements to become an official Workforce Development Center, a local center must include participation by each of the federally mandated DOL-funded programs (JTPA Titles II and III, Employment Services, Veterans Employment Services, Senior Community Service Employment Program, and Unemployment Insurance). In addition, the state requires local sites to involve partners responsible for the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program and the state's Promise JOBS program for AFDC recipients.[5] Participation by additional partners—such as those responsible for Vocational Rehabilitation, the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program, Homeless Training, the Indian and Native American Program, the School-to-Work Opportunities program, Job Corps, Apprenticeships, adult education, Carl Perkin's Act post-secondary programs, and student financial assistance programs—is "strongly encouraged."

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[5] Although each of these programs is supposed to be included in center operations and available to center customers, the state is interested in implementing a competitive local process to select the actual entity or entities that will provide services to center customers. The paradigm described by state staff as the model for service delivery in the long-term is "decentralized and competitively determined" service delivery arrangements.

The state has not prescribed a specific structure for managing day-to-day center operations and the management structures used in local workforce development centers vary from locality to locality. However, state guidelines for the development of local workforce development centers emphasize the importance of developing a *single center identity* supported by a *joint administration* to deliver core basic services to customers through a seamless workflow. In a document providing local actors with guidelines for the development of workforce development centers, the state defined joint administration as a structure that permits all center partners to "participate in Center operations and management through a shared mission and goals, contribution of resources, and shared oversight of the center facility and its functions." Features that were identified by the state as demonstrating a joint administration include the establishment of a center plan, the development of a center budget showing fiscal support from all partners, and the identification of a management team or designation of a single center manager approved by all partners.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

At the level of state policy makers, the Human Resources Investment Council and the Workforce Development Council play important roles in coordinating the different human services initiatives underway in the state (e.g., welfare reform, workforce development centers, and school-to-work efforts) and ensuring that the performance measures and technology tools developed to support these initiatives and promote system-wide accountability are mutually supportive and compatible.

State-level staff have identified communication and coordination as crucial to One-Stop implementation. Staff-level communication and coordination vehicles developed to support the One-Stop implementation process include: (1) cross-agency transition and special project teams and (2) the development of improved communication and information-sharing mechanisms for use by One-Stop partners. The inter-agency Workforce Development Management Team—led by the state Workforce Development Coordinator and with representation from all state-level partner agencies—has overall responsibility for setting state workforce development policy and supporting system transformation efforts. In addition, the Workforce Development Project Office (described above under Organization and Governance) plays an important role in the day-to-day coordination of efforts to promote consolidation and integration of services under the One-Stop initiative.

During the initial formation of the Department of Workforce Development, the state established seven inter-agency teams to address different aspects of the state-level transition and design the new workforce development system. As described below, these teams addressed issues associated with the creation of the consolidated state workforce development agency as well as with the establishment of local workforce development centers.

- The *Personnel Team* was charged with developing new job descriptions and procedures to merge Merit and non-Merit staff in the consolidated Workforce Development Department. The team was also responsible for conducting skills assessments and identifying staff training needs to inform the development of a capacity-building strategy for staff of the new Department.
- The *Staff Development Team* was responsible for addressing the training needs of staff transitioning to the new Department, as well as developing services for staff who are laid-off as a result of the reorganization.
- The *Substate Boundary Team* was responsible for coordinating with the Workforce Development Council to identify criteria with which to determine service delivery boundaries.[6]
- The *Administrative Processes Team* was responsible for evaluating administrative processes—from accounting procedures to procurement systems—and suggesting ways to streamline them that will allow continuity in the delivery of services to customers (i.e., the local sites).
- The *Information Systems Team* was charged with identifying the range of systems in place and recommending ways to streamline the information management process, with a view toward integrating all systems. This team is expected to coordinate closely with staff involved in parallel MIS efforts.
- The *Competitive Service Delivery Team* was asked to draft the design for a competitive bidding process to be used to select local service providers. This includes gathering information on assessing effectiveness and developing evaluation criteria to be used in selecting

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[6] Where to draw the boundaries of service delivery areas is an important issue in Iowa. The geographic service areas associated with the Area Education Agency (AEA) areas, the JTPA Title II service delivery areas (SDAs), and the substate areas for JTPA Title III are not identical. Because the community college system is expected to play a greater role in providing workforce development services than in the past, as are the local school districts (through school-to-work initiatives), local workforce development centers have expressed great interest in aligning these boundaries to ease their administrative processes.

bidders. This team is also responsible for recommending strategies for building the capacity of public sector staff to successfully compete in such processes.

- The *Regional Issues Team* was assigned to identify the new roles and responsibilities of various state and local stakeholders—such as regional board members, local elected officials, and formerly separate service providers—under an integrated system. This team was also charged with recommendation the formation of new inter-agency teams to deal with additional issues as they emerged.

As the overall design for the state's workforce development system started to take shape, the state established a number of working committees to address different details of One-Stop implementation. Iowa envisions a flexible management structure for its new workforce development system, wherein project teams will be established and dissolved as needed. At the time of the site visit, the committees described below were operational. The state anticipates that the committees, as well as the content of committee tasks, will change over time.

- The *Business Plan Committee* is responsible for recommending a menu of core services that should be available to all center customers. The committee will also examine the potential for fee-for-service arrangements.
- The *Center Guidelines Committee* is responsible for the planning and implementation of services and products in all of Iowa's workforce development centers. This includes activities such as identifying services and products that will be common to all centers, establishing skills-based assessment methods, and developing strategies for soliciting employer participation in the planning of local workforce development centers. This committee is expected to coordinate with other committees on a regular basis to prevent duplication of efforts.
- The *Integrated Information Systems Technical Committee* is responsible for providing guidance on the design of the integrated information systems plan, and providing input at various points of implementation. This committee is intended to work closely with the users committee described below.
- The *Integrated Information Systems Users Committee* was developed to "check" the activities of the Technical Committee (see above). The two committees work in concert to insure that new technologies under development meet the needs of center customers and line staff, and that any new products are user-friendly.

- The *Labor Market Information Committee* is responsible for the development and or implementation of LMI products that meet the needs of center customers and are easy to use.
- The *Capacity Building Committee* is tasked with identifying the training needs of staff at various levels of the workforce development system, recommending appropriate training programs to meet those needs, and establishing a system of credentialing whereby staff who have completed training are certified to perform specific functions.
- The *Performance Management Committee* is the designated liaison to the Iowa Council on Human Investment. It is responsible for providing guidance and input on the development of new performance measures and of establishing performance benchmarks. It is also charged with developing recommendations for a system of incentives and sanctions to govern the continuous quality improvement of the local sites.
- The *Marketing Committee* is responsible for developing a plan for helping local workforce development centers market their services to local job-seekers and employers. The committee will also facilitate the "Grand Opening" celebration in the local sites.
- The *Local Liaison Workgroup* is made up of a representative body of local workforce development stakeholders who will act as a communications link between the state- and local-level workforce development partners.
- The *Congressional/Legislative Committee* seeks to identify areas of potential legislative support for workforce development-related issues in Iowa. The committee monitors state and federal legislation, informs key state and local stakeholders of important legislative initiatives, and makes recommendations for action on the part of workforce development staff.
- The *Resource Development Committee* is concerned with developing additional or alternative sources of support for Iowa's workforce development system. Recognizing the limited availability of public funds, this committee seeks additional resources to support workforce development initiatives in Iowa.

The second approach used to support the One-Stop system-building process is the development of improved mechanisms for communication and information-sharing. The state has identified improved management information systems as important tools to support communication among partner agencies and between the state and local sites. Building the technology infrastructure and developing integrated information systems to support One-Stop operations have received high priority activity during the first year of One-Stop implementation. (See also the section on Labor Market Information and

Related Technology Improvements). Because the state's integrated MIS system is not available immediately, the state requires each local site to include a section in its local center plan on how staff of the various programs within the center will communicate with each other and share data until the state system is completed.

To promote communication between the state and local levels on One-Stop implementation issues, the state has identified a local workforce development liaison in each service delivery area. This individual receives memoranda prepared by the state to guide local system development and is intended to serve as the coordinator for local-level communication on One Stop issues. At the outset of the One-Stop planning process, the state also requested that each service delivery area convene a local implementation team to begin conversations on the building of local One-Stop partnerships. A staff member of the state Workforce Development Project Office was designated as a liaison to local sites to support their system development efforts. Every effort has been made to encourage local sites to design and take ownership of their own workforce development system, within the guidelines established by the state.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

As described above under Local Governance Structures, Iowa has encouraged local workforce development centers to develop integrated budgets showing how the resources from multiple partner agencies are being used to support consolidated center operations. At the time of the local evaluation site visits, however, neither of the local sites visited had completed formal consolidated center budgets, despite efforts to coordinate and co-locate staff from a wide variety of employment and training programs. Instead, informal cost-sharing agreements were being used to pay for shared facilities, equipment, and jointly-operated services. The continued existence of categorical programs at the federal level was perceived as a major barrier to consolidated budgeting. However, staff at all levels anticipated that the integration of state-level agencies, departments, and programs under the single Department of Workforce Development—together with changes in federal workforce development legislation—would result in the eventual integration of funding streams for all education, employment, and training programs in the state.

As the one source of funds allocated to the development of the workforce development system as a whole, One-Stop Implementation Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Labor have been an important catalyst for large-scale changes in the building of a statewide One-Stop system. The state of Iowa received $6.5 million in federal support for its One-Stop initiative, and an additional $1 million to support LMI development. The state has allocated the grant funds to support improvements in four main areas, including (1) state administration, (2) local implementation, (3) management information systems, and (4) labor market information. Each of these areas is discussed below.

State Administration. Approximately $600,000 of the implementation grant was allocated for activities to support state-level administration of workforce development services, including the transition to a consolidated Workforce Development agency on July 1, 1996. Budgeted activities included staff development, marketing, and networking/ communications with staff from other states.

Local Implementation. Approximately one-third of the DOL Implementation Grant was allocated to support the development of local workforce development centers. After requesting formal One-Stop implementation plans from all 16 service delivery areas, the state selected ten sites to receive implementation grant funds each of the first and second grant years, based on each site's demonstrated readiness and willingness to implement reform. The ten sites selected for funding during the first year, received levels of support ranging from $25,000 to $190,000. During the second year, five of the first-round grantees received repeat awards to continue their system-building efforts, and five new sites received funds. Although funding priorities were established locally, state-level respondents indicated that most sites planned to use the majority of their grant awards to upgrade physical facilities or purchase hardware that would support the state's new MIS system. Although information system development is seen as a state-level function, many local sites required technology upgrading in preparation for implementing the planned integrated MIS system and using new LMI products under development at the state level.

Labor Market Information Development. The state has devoted its $1 million LMI grant to the development of new consumer products for use in the workforce development centers. Among the products the state seeks to develop or improve are (1) the area wage survey, (2) the Data Center—an electronic bulletin board that lists job openings, labor market information, and recent employment news—and (3) a wage tracking system. The LMI grant, together with state funds, has also supported the development of a survey to determine customer needs that will inform strategic planning for local- and state-level staff capacity-building efforts.

Development of an Integrated Management Information System. Approximately one-third of the DOL Implementation Grant was used to support MIS development efforts. A new statewide integrated management information system (IMIS) is seen by staff at all levels as a key component of One-Stop system transformation in Iowa. State-level staff worked with outside private sector consultants as part of an interdepartmental task force to develop recommendations for Iowa's new system. The task force recommended that Iowa adopt an integrated information system in three phases: (1) first, creating access to information by establishing links between current programs and agencies; (2) developing a common intake system and employment and training database; and (3) creating a fully integrated system of case management, tracking, and automated eligibility determination.

Iowa is also supporting its MIS development efforts through its participation in a multi-state consortium that received an ALMIS grant to develop a common access and intake system for One-Stop systems. Within Iowa, Employment Service, JOBS, and JTPA are expected to be the first customers of the new system. The Vocational Rehabilitation program, which is also involved in MIS development, is expected to join the system at a later date. State staff hope to continue to support Iowa's MIS development efforts by playing a key role in the multi-state consortium—known as "George"—formed to develop an automated One-Stop case management/case tracking system.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

The state of Iowa has identified capacity building as a clear priority during One-Stop system implementation throughout the state. The Capacity Building Committee has identified two primary areas of focus within capacity building during the first implementation grant year: (1) technology training and (2) training in "systems change." Staff assigned to develop a state capacity-building approach believe that training and staff development efforts have an important role to play in helping people "feel safe in the change process" as organizational systems and cultural systems are transformed.

To date, the state's role in capacity-building has included efforts to identify staff training needs, develop curricula to address those needs, identify training providers, and make training available to state staff as well as to local sites to support local capacity building plans. Where appropriate, the Capacity Building Committee attempts to make use of already existing effective training materials rather than duplicating existing resources.[7] The state capacity-building staff prefer to begin with technology training, rather than team-building training, because technology training is more concrete and raises fewer staff fears about culture change. The state has also found that if staff from different agencies receive technology training together, there will be positive team-building side effects from the rapport developed during training.

To address the immediate need for technology training at the state level, the state contracted with the Iowa Community College System to provide training in the Windows program to state-level staff. An assessment of additional technology-training needs among state-level staff was underway at the time of the site visit. Capacity building efforts are being carefully coordinated with other system-building initiatives, such as MIS development. For example, as the Information Systems team prepares to implement a Windows-driven management information system, the capacity building team is working with outside vendors to provide training on the new system.

In developing local center plans, each local area is required to describe staff development and training needs and indicate how these needs will be met. State-level staff involved in capacity building have identified several characteristics, or "benchmarks," against which local training plans will be evaluated. Planned training programs plans will be assessed based on how they (1) meet specific staff needs, (2) promote skill-building over time, (3) identify measurable outcomes, (4) demonstrate cost-effectiveness, and (5) support enhanced customer service. The capacity-building team has shared these benchmarks with cross-agency staff who will be participating in training so that their internal evaluations of capacity-building efforts will be better informed.

To measure local technology training needs, the Capacity Building Committee developed an assessment tool. The Committee also solicited input from state MIS staff, as well as representatives from local One-Stop sites in identifying local training needs. After conducting surveys of core partner staff in each of the local sites, and conducting face-to-face discussions with staff in some sites, state-level staff responsible for capacity building were convinced that the local-level staff were "way out in front" of state-level staff in their desire for training because they deal with One-Stop customers. As a result, local-level staff require immediate training in the use of basic technology (e.g., computer literacy, word processing, and spread sheet applications) as well as familiarity with technology-based customer products in order to provide quality services to One-Stop customers. This is particularly crucial during the start-up period when the centers are introducing new products and services to their communities. Local technology training piloted at one local site at the time of the site visit included approximately ten hours of training for all center staff in computer literacy, Windows, and beginning word processing.

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[7] For example, capacity building staff seek to use effective products developed in other states or local areas or through the Department of Labor's *Simply Better* initiative.

Managers of the local sites also expressed great interest in instruction in team-building so that program and agency identities can be integrated within workforce development centers. State capacity-building staff recognize that addressing organizational change and training in continuous quality improvement strategies, team building, and collective decision-making will be a complex, long-term project. Consistent with this view, they plan to develop staff capacities gradually over time rather than in more concentrated doses during a short time period. Capacity-building staff seek to generate solid state- and local-level commitments of time and resources prior to such training. The team also seeks to integrate One-Stop training efforts with capacity building for school-to-work staff since both groups will be working through the new workforce development centers.

Labor Market Information and Technology-Based Customer Products

The state of Iowa seeks to use technology to support improved customer service by developing new products that facilitate customer access to information, services, and instruction. Independently of the One-Stop initiative, the state has invested heavily in its state-wide fiber optics network called the Iowa Communications Network or ICN. The ICN offers the capability of conducting two-way information sharing and data transmission, including voice, video, and teleconferencing. Although originally conceived as a means to link rural Iowans to educational and professional opportunities, as well as remote access to services such as medical care, the ICN plays a critical role in supporting state-wide data transmission and access to the Internet. For job seekers and students, the ICN provides alternatives to traditional classroom instruction, and creates new possibilities for remote learning/training activities.

As part of the One-Stop initiative, the state has reviewed its LMI products to identify how they can be improved to be more useful to One-Stop staff and customers. The objective of the LMI improvement effort is to ensure that information is available in a timely and user-friendly format that will help customers make informed choices about their futures. In addition, the state would like to develop a "consumer report card system" that will help program operators and customers review the employment outcomes that are likely to follow from participation in various education and training programs.

Although the state encourages local sites to explore new LMI products and services, it has taken the lead in the development of new products designed for customer use. The development of new consumer products for use in the workforce development centers throughout the state is largely the responsibility of the Labor Market Information Committee. This committee was established in 1995, prior to the creation of the other One-Stop committees. The committee works closely with the inter-agency Information Systems Team. Early on, the Committee identified five priority areas and has been pursuing innovations in each of them since the Spring of 1995. These areas include: (1) a regional occupational wage database, (2) products or linkages that improve the quality and accessibility of the state's Data Center,[8] (3) a pilot project involving the assessment of customer information needs and staff training needs in the area of labor market information, (4) a pilot project to identify LMI products that can support a "state-of-the-art" resource room in a One-Stop center, and (5) the development of state-wide and regional versions of a publication that identifies employment trends and expected growth areas.

Although the Committee anticipates being involved in ongoing continuous improvement efforts, it has already met several objectives. Among the major milestones that staff identified during the site visit were the development of the state's Web site,[9] the introduction of new self-contained consumer products intended for use in the centers—including CD-based programs to provide job search, help with resume development, and basic career information—and participation in several multi-state initiatives around LMI product-development.[10] In addition, the state has contracted with the state of North Carolina for the development of a version of that state's PC-based LMI system customized to Iowa's labor market information needs.

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[8] The Data Center is an electronic bulletin board that lists job openings, labor market information, and recent employment news. It can be accessed remotely via a personal computer and modem or through the workforce development center computers.

[9] The state Web site is linked to America's Job Bank, Iowa's Job Bank, and Iowa LMI. However, since not all local sites are linked to the Internet, these services are available through the Internet in only a limited number of service areas. All workforce development centers also offer access to job listings via local terminals connected to the ALEX system.

Management Information Systems

From the outset, the development of integrated information systems has been a high priority for One-Stop system development in Iowa. The Information Systems Team formed to develop recommendations for improved information management adopted four design principles, including (1) *customer choice*—customers should be able to select the services that best meet their needs; (2) *proportional data collection*—information collected for service delivery will be proportional to the level of service provided; (3) *cumulative data collection*—data will be gathered cumulatively to avoid duplication of efforts; and (4) *confidentiality*—data collection efforts will reflect a high level of respect for customer privacy.[11] State-level respondents in Iowa repeatedly emphasized that "customers" exist both inside and outside of the workforce development system. That is, state-level agencies and staff are each other's customers in terms of data transmission and reporting.

The task force has planned a three-stage implementation process for the new MIS system. The first stage involves connecting existing information systems—electronic linkages will be established and interfaces developed that will permit easier transmission of existing data. The second stage revolves around the development of a common information intake system for use in the centers themselves. The new system will be linked to existing information systems but will also serve as the centerpiece of the Department of Workforce Development's new integrated employment and training database. The third stage will emphasize full-scale integration—the creation of an information system integrated by function (not program or department), and capable of collecting and managing client information as well as assisting in eligibility determinations.

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[10] The state is involved in a consortium developing statewide Talent Banks and is working with the state of Texas on the Consumer Report Card project.

[11] Several external consultants have also been involved in the MIS design project.

At the time of the site visit, the first stage of implementation was well underway—electronic linkages, including local area networks (LANs) had been established linking the state to local sites and offering the opportunity to link local partners to each other. Iowa had also made progress in completing the second stage—developing its common intake system. As a result of its participation in the multi-state Common Intake consortium, Iowa has assisted in the development of the Common Intake Prototype. This system, driven by Lotus Notes, has been designed to support the ability of multiple users (including agency staff and workforce development center customers) to access differing levels and types of data according to their individual needs/clearance codes. At the time of the site visit, Iowa planned to customize and pilot the common intake prototype in its individual centers by the end of 1996.

Marketing

An inter-agency Marketing Team has identified three critical areas in which One-Stop marketing efforts will be concentrated during the initial implementation of local workforce development centers. These include (1) marketing the statewide transformation of workforce development services to customers and potential customers, (2) assisting the local sites in marketing their services to their local communities, and (3) marketing the One-Stop initiative to state-level staff of the agencies and departments involved in workforce development.

Marketing the Transformed System to Current and Potential Customers. Planned changes in the design and delivery of workforce development services in Iowa are significant. State-level staff indicated that the planned "roll-out" of One-Stop centers provided them with opportunities both to inform current customers of coming changes in the system and to market new services to customers who were not frequent users of the old system, particularly employers. At the time of the site visit, the team faced several marketing challenges. First, because the integrated Department of Workforce Development had not yet been established, state-level staff were uncertain about the details of the planned state-level administrative structure, and were hesitant to market a change that had not yet occurred. Moreover, key decisions about how to distinguish between the new Workforce Development department and the One-Stop system as a whole in marketing efforts had not yet been made.[12]

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[12] For example, it was unclear whether a logo originally developed to represent the One-Stop initiative as a whole would be taken over as the logo of the new Department of Workforce

Second, the state Marketing Team had to determine how to assist local marketing efforts without "stealing the thunder" from local marketing efforts, since a key feature of the new workforce development system was increased local control. Third, since the workforce development centers were scheduled to open gradually over the course of two years, the state was concerned about marketing services that were not yet be available in all local sites. Finally, at the time of the site visit, the team was becoming aware of the need to coordinate marketing with parallel state-level marketing efforts around related services, such as the use of the ICN for remote learning activities. As a result of these challenges, the state has proceeded cautiously and in consultation with local sites in developing its marketing approach. Staff anticipated that setting state marketing priorities and developing specific marketing plans would become easier after the Department of Workforce Development was officially established in July 1996.

Assisting Local Sites in Marketing Centers. The Marketing Team has been active in assisting local One-Stop sites with their own marketing efforts. Each of the workforce development centers has held a well-publicized open house as a part of its "grand opening" activities. The state has helped local partners to plan these events by developing an event-planning manual—with step-by-step instructions—tailored to the needs of the local sites. In addition, the state has solicited the participation of senior state-level workforce development staff and state or congressional representatives in the local opening receptions. State staff have also conducted assessments of new products and services offered locally and helped local sites to develop a strategic marketing plan for these services. Among the topics that local partners have identified as One-Stop marketing issues are (1) how to market workforce development services to students in local primary and secondary schools and (2) how to develop and market new services to meet the needs of employer customers, job-changers, and individuals seeking information on education and training opportunities. Local One-Stop sites have also requested state-level assistance in developing brochures, press releases, and other informational materials for local consumption.

Marketing the One-Stop System to Internal Customers. The state Marketing Team has also identified a need to market the One-Stop initiative to the staff of the state

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Development. Since several key state One-Stop partners and programs are not included in the consolidated agency—most notably the Education Department, including the Vocational Rehabilitation Division, and the Department of Human Resources—it is important to find a marketing logo for One-Stop that is distinct from that of the new agency.

and local agencies that are partners in the One-Stop effort. Toward that end, the state is working on the following products: (1) a newsletter for the staff of state- and local-level partner agencies; (2) marketing products designed to bring in new partner agencies, departments, and programs; and (3) a systematic process for disseminating information on workforce development products and services to all One-Stop partners.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Iowa has taken a bold and comprehensive approach to workforce development reform. Although One-Stop implementation is still in a formative stage in Iowa, the state has begun transitioning to a new system of education, employment, and training service delivery. This system is characterized by (1) a phased-in approach that emphasizes state-level administrative changes during the first implementation year; (2) planned coordination between a number of different public reform efforts, including the welfare-to-work and school-to-work initiatives; (3) coordination and eventual integration of local partners in workforce development centers supported by an integrated information management system; and (4) improved linkages between local workforce development and economic development entities.

The state included a broad range of agency, department, and program representatives in the planning and implementation of the One-Stop initiative well in-advance of the establishment of the consolidated Workforce Development Department. This joint planning, in combination with the state's early emphasis on internal marketing of the One-Stop initiative to agency staff, contributed to good will among many different agency partners who will be affected by the transition.

Inevitably, however, staff within agencies affected by reorganizations are affected by the uncertainty surrounding their individual and agency futures as well as by the need to adjust to the "culture changes" that accompany the One-Stop initiative. At the state level, uncertainty remains about whether and how the education, school-to-work, and vocational rehabilitation programs will be incorporated into integrated workforce development system over time. At the local level, the greatest unknown at the time of the site visit was whether the state would require local service providers to compete for contracts and how this would affect the relationships among the local One-Stop partners. The state Capacity Building Committee has recognized the importance of responding to culture change with training that helps staff from all participating agencies adjust to system change and strengthens team work skills.

However, it has taken time to develop internal support for the One-Stop transformation and to coordinate state-level planning and early local implementation efforts. Initially, the state wanted to spend the first year of the One-Stop implementation grant in state transformation and system-building and to move on to local implementation efforts during the second year. Ultimately, as a condition of the DOL One-Stop grant, state and local implementation efforts were undertaken simultaneously. This created some difficulties, because the state was still making important decisions at the same time that selected first-year sites were encouraged to move ahead with local One-Stop implementation. Staff in these sites were encouraged to develop their own One-Stop visions and design their own local systems without much detailed guidance from the state, which caused confusion. It also prevented the state from being as ready to meet the capacity-building needs of local staff as quickly as state and local partners would have liked.

Overall, Iowa has developed a comprehensive and sophisticated implementation plan, particularly in the development of an integrated information system and performance management system. The One-Stop initiative in Iowa has developed a unifying vision and appears to have broad-based support among key stakeholders at the state and local levels.

APPENDIX H

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
CRESTON, IOWA
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During May 1996

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
CRESTON, IOWA
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 1/29/97

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
CRESTON, IOWA
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Workforce Development Center (Center) in Creston is the designated One-Stop center serving SDA 14, a predominantly rural area in southwestern Iowa. Although Center staff provide workforce development services throughout the region by traveling regularly to satellite or "itinerant" locations hosted by a variety of social service agencies, this profile focuses on the Creston Center.

The Creston Workforce Development Center is located in downtown Creston, a small town of 3,000 people in the heart of Union County about 70 miles southeast of Des Moines. The official Center service area covers seven counties (Adair, Adams, Clarke, Decatur, Ringgold, Taylor, and Union) with a combined population of about 55,000 residents. Center staff indicated that they often provide services to residents of Madison and Warren counties as well.[1]

The employment outlook in the seven-county region is somewhat bleak. Structural dislocation in both agriculture and manufacturing has led to a substantial erosion of the local economic base over the last fifteen years. During the past three years, the largest employer in six of the seven counties has closed, moved, or downsized. As a result, there are few large employers left in the SDA and remaining employers are able to draw employees from the entire region. The official unemployment rate stands at about 7%, but staff indicated that this figure is a significant underestimate and that *under*employment is also a serious problem.

Because so many local residents have been affected by economic dislocations caused by the failure of family farms, the downsizing or closure of manufacturing plants, or natural disasters (e.g. floods, tornadoes), there is little stigma attached to receiving assistance from taxpayer-supported programs. Thus the Creston Workforce

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[1] These two counties, although officially part of the Des Moines service delivery area, share the largely rural character of SDA 14. Local respondents said that customers from these counties feel more comfortable seeking services in Creston than in downtown Des Moines.

Development Center has an easier time marketing its services to local residents than do centers in areas where the local culture discourages participation in public programs.

The Creston Center is still in the early stages of efforts to establish consolidated workforce development services. Although partners agree on the benefits to be obtained from co-location and closer coordination of services, agreement has not yet been reached on whether or how to integrate service delivery across participating partners. The local vision of One-Stop service delivery is focused on (1) simplifying and coordinating program services; (2) creating more flexible service-delivery structures; (3) ensuring high standards of service for individual and employer customers; and (4) planning for consolidation, and possible eventual integration, of common functions among partner agencies and programs. Among the local partners, some staff are reluctant to relinquish individual program identities and be subsumed under a single workforce development entity; others see such integration as an important means of providing high quality customer service; still others express a desire for a middle-ground wherein some functions would be integrated and others would remain program-based.

Two types of contextual variables have influenced the development of the One-Stop approach in Creston: *state and federal initiatives* that affect local decision-making with regard to workforce development issues, and factors associated with the *local context*. Among the federal- and state-level factors are: (1) an expectation of funding reductions in federal budget allocations to local sites under block grants; and (2) uncertainty, at least in the short term, about the structures for organization and governance of state and local workforce development programs. Local factors that impact the emergence of the One-Stop system include: (3) strong local support for welfare reform efforts; (4) limited employment opportunities in the local economy; (5) the large size and rural nature of the local service delivery area; and (6) the personalized small-town/rural culture of the community served by the Creston Center. Each of these factors is briefly described below:

- *A number of the partner programs and agencies, including ES, UI, and VETS, have experienced substantial funding cuts in recent years. At the time of the site visit it was expected that the transition to block grants would be accompanied by further reductions in overall budget allocations.* The threat of budget cutbacks causes local respondents to have mixed feelings about the One-Stop initiative. On the one hand, Center staff fear that the One-Stop initiative will disguise the impact of the funding reductions to the general public and create unrealistic expectations that staff can "do more with less." On the other hand, Center staff perceive the importance of developing more cost-effective ways to provide high-quality services to larger numbers of customers.

- *At the time of the site visit, there was considerable uncertainty over the organizational and governance arrangements for One-Stop at both the state and local levels.* State policymakers were in the midst of a major reorganization of state government that unified a number of different workforce development programs in a single state agency. During the transition to the integrated state agency, state staff were not always ready to provide policy guidance on a number of issues ranging from the use of the state's logo for One-Stop centers to the selection of local service providers under One-Stop. Local staff are concerned about job security, wages, benefits, and overall issues of control among the local partners. Furthermore, local partners are concerned that they will be required to compete among themselves for future contracts to operate the Center. These issues have the potential to undermine efforts to develop integrated service delivery and team-oriented approaches to service design and Center management.

- *There is strong local support for PROMISE JOBS, the state's welfare-to-work initiative, which calls for participants to move rapidly toward full-time employment.* To encourage the transition from welfare to work, the program offers transitional benefits and supportive services to assist families in leaving public assistance programs. Because of the strong work philosophy guiding this program, extended post-secondary training prior to employment is no longer encouraged for JOBS customers. The initiative increases the pressure on Workforce Development Centers to assist customers with direct placement, rather than to develop expanded opportunities to enroll customers in training programs.

- *The local service area has experienced both major economic shifts and serious natural disasters during recent years, causing widespread economic hardship.* The farm crisis of the mid-1980s, dislocations resulting from the foreign relocation or closure of local manufacturing firms, and the floods of 1993 were among the most frequently cited reasons for the chronically high unemployment rates and stagnant regional economy. In this environment, the objective of helping customers prepare for and find high-quality employment is very difficult to realize. It is also difficult for Center staff to market public services to employers in a labor market environment in which numerous applicants for most job openings can be recruited by word-of-mouth.

- *The geographic area served by the Creston Workforce Development Center is large—covering 3,000 square miles—and rural. Few roads, long distances between towns, and poor public transportation make it* *difficult for many potential customers to travel to the Creston Center.* Because of this difficulty, participating partner agencies have developed a service delivery strategy that encourages staff travel to out-stationed service sites. Representatives from programs such as the Older Workers Program or Veterans Employment Program travel from town to town during the week, occupying space provided by county agencies or other public and private social service providers.

- *The local political culture and the multiple social relationships among small-town residents increases the probability that staff from the participating agencies know each other personally and/or know their customers.* This personalized nature of relationships among partners and between service providers and customers tends to increase the accountability and responsiveness of staff to customer needs. Additionally, it has assisted in the development of informal coordination efforts across partner agencies. Ironically, it may also impede the development of formal memoranda of understanding among partners.[2]

In the local environment described above, the development of a One-Stop workforce development system faces serious design and implementation challenges. For the most part, the partners at the Creston Workforce Development Center are addressing these challenges with good will and enthusiasm.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Oversight and Administration. To guide One-Stop planning efforts, local partners initially convened an informal planning group with broad representation from workforce development, education, and human service agencies. Members included representatives from the agencies responsible for JTPA, Wagner-Peyser, welfare, vocational rehabilitation, the community college system, the Iowa State University, local primary and secondary education providers, as well as local community action agencies and local employers. Over time, this group has evolved into a 13-member "regional work group" that serves as the formal advisory body to the emerging One-Stop initiative. Eight different agencies are represented on the current regional work group. The work group coordinates services across the partner agencies and supervises the sharing of office space within the Creston facility. In addition, the JTPA Private

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[2] Respondents suggested that the development of formal agreements in a small-town culture would be interpreted as a sign that the local partners did not trust each other.

Industry Council, because of its important role in overseeing local JTPA programs, has also been influential in providing policy guidance to the emerging One-Stop initiative.

The local governance structure for One-Stop services is expected to change as a result of state legislation passed in the spring of 1996, although the scope and specific nature of the changes were not yet apparent at the time of the site visit. The state legislation calls for the creation of a *Regional Advisory Board* to advise the state Workforce Development Department and Workforce Development Board about regional workforce development needs, assist in decisions about the state award of grants or contracts for the delivery of regional workforce development services, and monitor the performance of local service providers. According to the new legislation, Regional Advisory Board members will be appointed by the governor based on recommendations submitted by local elected officials. Regional boards are slated to include representatives from business and labor, county and municipal elected officials, and representatives from local community colleges. Local respondents expect that there will be some continuity between the current makeup of the JTPA Private Industry Council and/or the regional work group and the Regional Advisory Board.

The vision described in the recent state legislation calls for the state to become a "broker" rather than a direct provider of local workforce development services. [3] Under the competitive model articulated in the legislation and promoted by the new state Workforce Development Department director, existing public workforce development agencies, such as local Wagner-Peyser and JTPA administrative entities, will be encouraged to compete for service contracts with other non-governmental entities. Thus, in the future, local partners may be able to compete against each other or form a consortium to become the designated local One-Stop provider.

At the present time, however, the key providers of public workforce development services in SDA 14 include Job Service, staffed by state employees who recently became part of an integrated state Workforce Development Department,[4] and MATURA, a local community action agency which is the local JTPA administrative entity for SDA 14 and employs local JTPA staff. These two agencies, along with the three additional "core" partners (described below), provide services at the Creston Workforce Development Center.

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[3] This vision presumed the passage of federal block grant legislation for workforce development services.

[4] At the time of the site visit, WDD was about to be created as an integrated state agency responsible for overseeing Job Service, JTPA, and other workforce development programs previously housed in separate agencies.

Currently, the Creston Center is managed by a Center Director, who is the SDA director for the local JTPA program. The SDA director and the local Job Service office manager coordinate in administering the Center's day-to-day functions. The Center Director, selected with the agreement of the state's regional Job Service manager, is responsible for overall management of the shared physical facility and day-to-day operations of the Creston Workforce Development Center partners. He also serves as the primary liaison between the various state agencies, departments, and programs represented at the center.

The Center Director is clearly interested in emphasizing a team-based, participatory management style. Since the local staff of the Creston Center is relatively small, *all* staff are involved in weekly planning meetings at which issues affecting the operation and future of the Center are discussed. The Center Director views such grassroots staff involvement as an important capacity-building tool for local staff. As the various partners jointly plan and administer the Center, they increase their familiarity with the range of services offered at the Center, and begin to think of themselves as Center representatives, rather than as representatives of their individual programs and agencies. Such familiarity is also crucial in supporting the Center's community outreach and "itinerant" services efforts. Because so many of the partners provide services off-site, they must be able to field questions and inquiries about Center operations and activities and provide referral information, as well as deliver services on behalf of their own individual programs or agencies.

Core Partners. Five agencies are "core" partners in the Creston Workforce Development Center. Each of these agencies has staff housed in the Creston Center and each is an active participant in Center planning and administration. Core partners include:

- *The Job Service Division of the Iowa Workforce Development Department (WDD)*—formerly the Department of Employment Security (DES). Job Service employees provide UI, Wagner-Peyser-funded activities (ES), and VETS services to Center customers. Job Service is also a contractor for the state's PROMISE JOBS program for AFDC recipients, which it operates jointly with the local JTPA program staff, and the Food Stamp Employment and Training program.

- *MATURA*, a community action agency that is the administrative entity for the Job Training Partnership Act in SDA 14. MATURA staff provide services under JTPA programs for economically disadvantaged and dislocated workers. They also administer discretionary grants received from federal and state departments after a series of recent floods, tornadoes, and other natural disasters to support disaster clean-up initiatives. MATURA is also a contractor for training services to PROMISE JOBS participants, but, at the time of the site visit, had no funds available to enroll new customers in this program.
- *Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVR).* Two DVR staff are housed at the Center. Although interested in participating in One-Stop services as a strategy to improve services for all customers, these individuals have been prevented by legislative/regulatory barriers from working with customers who are not eligible for DVR services.
- *Area 14 Agency on Aging.* This agency maintains a half-time older worker specialist at the Center, funded under the state's Retired Iowan Community Employment Program (RICEP) to administer older worker programs. She is housed with the Job Service staff at the Center and participates in planning meetings when she is on-site.

In addition to sharing the physical space at the Center, each of the core partners is participating, although to varying degrees, in plans for the consolidation of some common functions.

Non-Core Partners. The Center staff is also in the process of establishing policies and procedures governing the participation of partners who are not co-located in the Center, but who offer complementary services. Additional "non-core" partners, with whom the Center coordinates through agency representation on formal and informal planning groups, include the following:

- *The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS)*, which is responsible for cash assistance and other family support services and is represented on the regional work group. Although DHS has been an active partner in One-Stop planning at the state level, this agency has been less active in local planning efforts for the Creston site. The local DHS office is located only a short distance from the Center and staff are usually able to coordinate services to clients receiving services from both systems. At the present time, Center partners do not have the ability to access electronic information from the DHS system. Once this barrier is overcome, increased coordination will be more feasible.
- *Southwestern Community College.* Representatives from the College participate on the regional work group and are actively involved in local

planning and administration of the One-Stop initiative. Referral linkages between JTPA and the College are also strong, since approximately one-third of the community college's student population of 1,200 are enrolled in JTPA programs. Some respondents fear that the College may choose to compete with the current core partners for future One-Stop service delivery contracts.

- *The extension campuses of Iowa State University and the University of Iowa.* These educational institutions participated in the initial planning group for the local One-Stop initiative but are not currently participating on the regional work group. Center staff expect the two universities to become increasingly important providers of training services to Center customers as the state develops its new fiber-optic network and creates new opportunities for remote learning.
- *Local primary and secondary school systems.* Although K-12 schools were involved in early informal planning meetings, they are not represented on the current regional work group. Core partners have invited the primary and secondary schools into the One-Stop initiative because of increasing interest in coordinating One-Stop and school-to-work strategies at the local level. Potential connections include coordinated regional planning efforts as well as recruitment of local students and educators as customers of the information services available in the Center's Resource Room.

The Local Council of Governments, the JTPA Private Industry Council, and two local community action agencies have also been involved in planning the new workforce development initiative and are likely to maintain an important role through participation on local advisory boards. They have also played an important role in linking workforce development programs and staff to economic development agencies and initiatives. These varied stakeholders are beginning to recognize the benefits to be obtained from marketing the region as a whole to potential new employers, rather than competing with each other to attract new businesses.

In summary, the local organization of the One-Stop initiative in the Creston Workforce Development Center is characterized by (1) recent co-location of core workforce development partners; (2) commitment to a common interagency planning process; and (3) varying levels of support among "core partners" in planning for the consolidation or integration of services. Future state-level decisions may transform the local delivery framework by introducing a competitive process for selecting which agencies will deliver local workforce development services.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Local communication and coordination mechanisms for supporting One-Stop development include weekly staff planning meetings, as well as regular meetings of the regional work group. To date, the primary focus of these planning groups has been on physically integrating the space of the Creston Center, and transforming the center into a single shared office, rather than on coordinating the several programs housed side-by-side in the same physical structure.

Only after co-location of the core partners was accomplished in January 1996 did the various planning meetings begin to strategize about the potential for new services and improved service delivery. Uncertainty and fear of change in such basic areas as job security, wages and benefits, and the need for flexible staff schedules to support expanded office hours have hampered efforts by One-Stop facilitators to focus staff attention on these issues. All of the partners indicated that the process of co-location and the regular Center-wide staff meetings have provided staff with opportunities to better understand the roles of other partner agencies and programs, but many staff still find it difficult to relinquish individual program identities in favor of a single shared Center identity.

The Center Director sees improved daily communication among Center staff as one way to overcome this challenge and support the development of a unified Center identity among staff. To support improved communication across Center partners, the Center recently installed an integrated phone system that allows for the transfer of calls between employees of different programs housed at the Center. Staff were generally positive about the degree to which the system has rendered intra-office communication more efficient and effective, although individual staff indicated that they required additional training to be able to use the system to its full capacity.[5]

Direct communication between the Creston Center and the state One-Stop team has generally occurred through the Center Director, who then shares information with the rest of the staff. Although this strategy ensures that local staff have access to the identical information, it has limited the opportunities for staff to discuss issues related to One-Stop service design with workforce development staff outside the local area. Most local respondents indicated that they would like to have broadened day-to-day communication between state and local staff of different programs or agencies.

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[5] Customers of the Center were not so positive about the new phone system, because it offered a self-driven menu of recorded messages as the initial screen to inform customers about available services. Customers much preferred the previous system in which they were connected to a "real person" when they called one of the Center partners.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

To support the creation of an integrated workforce development center by the local One-Stop partners, SDA 14 received $190,000 from the state's first year Implementation Grant funds. Most of the local One-Stop funds were used to remodel the new Center facility so that it would support coordinated services among the agencies located at the Center. At a cost of $150,000, local partners had a contractor remove a wall that formerly divided the Center space into two separate halves in order to create an attractive unified office space. Additional One-Stop funds in the amount of $22,000 were used to select and install a shared telephone system to be used by all on-site partners. Additionally, the Iowa General Services Administration contributed $29,000 on behalf of Job Service for the purchase of new shared fax and copy machines for use by all Center partners. These shared purchases, in combination with the new spatial arrangement at the Creston Center, are laying the groundwork for increasing coordination, and eventual integration of services among Center partners.

At the time of the site visit, no formal cost-sharing arrangements had been developed to support consolidated Center services using categorical funding streams. The Center space is still paid for by two separate leases maintained by the state Workforce Development Department (for Job Service) and MATURA (for the JTPA program staff).

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

When local partners first started planning for a One-Stop approach to the delivery of workforce development services, Job Service and JTPA were located in different buildings. Although JTPA and Job Service were interested in co-locating, DES had signed a ten-year lease on its space only two years before the planning process began. Partners were originally under the impression that the state of Iowa would support lease buy-outs that would enable core partners to relocate. However, after the planning process had begun, local partners learned that the state would *not* provide such funds. So, to achieve co-location, the JTPA program finally arranged to "swap" its leased space with the local Social Security Administration office, which had been housed in the same building as Job Service.

The move took place during the winter of 1995-96. Remodeling of the combined space began shortly thereafter. Although co-location is only a small part of the long-term One-Stop vision of local partners, it was a crucial first step in that (1) co-location was a tangible symbol of the shift to workforce development as a single initiative, rather than a complicated maze of categorical programs, and (2) until co-location was accomplished, partners were hampered in their ability to plan for coordination/ integration of services.

More recently, core partners have begun to focus on new services that the Center, as a single entity, could provide employer and individual customers. The local planners are aware that the state will need to take the lead on many of the changes that will influence One-Stop service delivery at the local level—from decisions about the selection of and relationships between contracted service providers at the local level, to designs for integrated customer information systems and intake procedures. Nevertheless, the local partners have attempted to define customer service improvements that can be accomplished at the local level without being contradicted by subsequent state design initiatives. Current areas of interest for coordinated/integrated services include shared outreach and marketing of the services available from all core partners as well as the development of an integrated intake and referral process for all partners.

The local partners representing vocational rehabilitation and older worker services are clear about wanting to be involved in planning for integrated services from the "ground up," so that One-Stop services will be as responsive as possible to the special needs of their particular target groups. They also believe that consolidated services, if designed from a customer service perspective, can improve service quality for all customers. In addition, all partners see a potential benefit for the workforce development system as a whole from improved coordination between workforce development services and economic development and school-to-work initiatives.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

Among the challenges faced by staff of the Creston Center in operationalizing the concept of universal access are: (1) how to maintain high quality services for customers eligible for enhanced services through various categorical programs; and (2) how to develop new services that will appeal to a wide range of employer and individual customers (including "value-added" services for which the center might charge).

Each of these issues is being discussed on a regular basis by the core Center partners as well as among the planning partners. At the time of the site visit, however, local staff indicated that little tangible progress could be made until the state implemented its integrated Department of Workforce Development[6] and provided clearer policy directives to local areas.

Although there is widespread general support among Center staff for the concept of universal access, some partners expressed a concern about how to preserve the quality of services offered to the current customers of categorical programs. For example, staff serving Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) customers indicated that they liked the fact that their customers would be less likely to be perceived as having "special needs" and would have improved access to a wide array of services. However, they were concerned that the service priority and service intensity granted DVR customers might diminish under a One-Stop system. They also worried that staff serving DVR customers under a One-Stop system would not have the same high level of specialized training and counseling credentials as current DVR staff. Similar concerns were expressed by the Veterans Employment Services staff on behalf of their customers.

Center staff have only recently begun to strategize about how to reach a broader range of job seeker and employer customers and what how to ensure that services will be attractive to this expanded customer population. Like the state One-Stop staff, staff in the Creston Center look to technology to support the process of universal services. Staff are aware that the state of Iowa is investing heavily in the development of new technology and technology-based products and services. For example, the Iowa Communications Network, a fiber optics network, will ultimately create opportunities for remote classroom training for Iowa residents throughout the state. The state is also investing in the development of automated self-service labor market information products. However, there is skepticism among some Center staff who feel that such new services, particularly self-driven services, will not appeal to many customers within SDA 14.

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[6] This took place on July 1, 1996.

Center staff have also discussed extending or adjusting center hours so that job-seekers who are already employed or in training programs have more opportunities to access services. Among the options being discussed are Saturday hours and extended evening hours once or twice per week. To date, however, state merit employees have been reluctant to commit to such changes without consulting their union representatives about what is and is not permissible under current regulations.

Finally, to make Center services accessible to residents throughout the seven-county region, Center staff have developed an elaborate network of remote service locations throughout the region. These locations include offices of government agencies, community-based organizations, and schools. Individual Center staff travel to these locations on a regular basis to meet with customers who cannot travel to Creston for services.

Customer Choice

The Center offers customers considerable choice in terms of *where* they can access services as well as *how* they may access services. All respondents emphasized the importance of providing customers with the opportunity to make informed and meaningful choices. In addition to the services provided by staff at the Creston Center or at outstationed service sites, customers may receive some services through a small number of kiosks located in public places such as the local shopping center. These have not been popular among customers, however, and have required considerable maintenance. As a result, staff did not think highly of them.

The Center Director envisions that technology-based products available in the Center's Resource Room will eventually offer customers a variety of assessment, job search, and resume support services, including self-driven and assisted services. With few exceptions, however, Center staff were ambivalent about the technology-based services offered or planned for the Resource Room, in part because they had not yet been trained in how to use these new applications, and in part because they feared that such automation would undermine the personal quality of services. Staff felt that the latter issue was particularly important in a rural area like Creston. "People expect personal service here," one staff person said, "and we need to be attentive to that when we design computer-driven forms of assistance." [7]

Integrated Services

Although there is increasing coordination between staff of partner agencies in the Creston Center, the only functions that have been integrated to date are customer reception, the management of the consolidated physical facility, and the provision of self-service automated information and training services in the Resource Room.

With the removal of the physical barrier that divided Job Service from JTPA, the partners established a common reception area to support the eventual goal of integrated services. This makes it possible for customers to inquire about Center services from a single receptionist, rather than having to navigate their way through a series of separate reception areas. Moreover, the common reception/waiting area is near the Resource Room and the Center staff encourage customers to explore the area while they are waiting to receive staffed services.

The Center is still assessing the need for a full- or part-time Resource Room specialist who could market the services available in the Resource Room and assist customers in using these services. Currently, the receptionist answers some questions, and other staff fill-in with customer support as needed. However, since many of the technology-based tools are new to the staff as well as to the customers, most staff need to be trained in their use before they can assist Center customers.

At the time of the site visit, the staff at the Center had many questions about how much discretion they would be allowed in integrating services across different funding streams. Partners felt burdened by agency or program regulations that they perceived as barriers to serving a broad range of customers or sharing funds across programs. Center staff hoped that the state would begin to assist local sites in breaking down some of these barriers, once the integrated Iowa Workforce Development Department was established at the state level.

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[7] This staff person reported that customers frustrated with the impersonal nature of the Center's new menu-driven telephone system had confronted her with complaints at her home and in the local supermarket.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Local partners emphasized customer satisfaction as a key performance standard, at least partly because the limited job opportunities in the local economy preclude stellar performance on job placement measures. Providing high-quality customer service is a clear priority among all individual program or agency staff housed at the Center. Some staff attributed the importance of customer satisfaction to the "small-town" character of rural Iowa. If customer satisfaction is a problem, staff know that they will hear about it from friends, relatives, and neighbors. Most respondents felt that there is a higher level of accountability between Creston Center staff and customers than there would be in a more urban area because of the small-scale social networks. Moreover, precisely because of these close personal relationships, staff generally take a great deal of pride in their work because the customers that they are helping may also be friends and neighbors.

Center staff have not yet developed Center-wide performance measures. Rather, in the absence of a uniform Center identity, staff are still relying on program-based performance measures to assess their performance. Two reasons were cited for the decision not to emphasize performance measurement at this time: (1) the absence of an integrated information system than could track outcomes across partner programs; and (2) the desire to establish a more integrated system before implementing accountability mechanisms.

Center staff perceive the development of an integrated information system to support Center-wide accountability measures to be a state-level task. Furthermore, local staff indicated, this task must be accomplished before a local performance measurement system can be designed or implemented. Staff are aware that the state of Iowa is investing heavily in the development of a management information system that will vastly improve the ability of state and local agencies and programs to document services and outcomes and share information. Moreover, customer satisfaction tools and measures of customer utilization of self-service offerings are expected to comprise an important part of new accountability systems. Once the information systems necessary to support new accountability measures are established, Center staff expect to provide input into the development of specific reporting measures.

Individual staff members are wary of establishing performance measures too soon. They recognize that the Creston Center is still in the early stages of developing an integrated approach to customer services and feel that they need more time to assess local needs and develop new and improved services. They expressed concern that the premature implementation of a uniform set of performance measures, even one reflecting a new customer service orientation and encouraging new employer services, will stifle innovation and experimentation among local sites. Local staff in Creston indicated that the Center required more time to "grow into its vision" before staff will be ready to implement performance measurement and continuous quality improvement mechanisms.

Physical Facilities

The Creston Workforce Development Center is located in a single-story office building on a main street in downtown Creston. The partners are pleased that an additional 2,000 square feet of unoccupied (and unrenovated) space adjoins the 8,000 square-foot Center space. Thus, if new partners join the Center or if the space needs of the current partners increases, expansion will be possible. To prepare the Center for shared occupancy by the current partners, the majority of the local One-Stop implementation grant funds was used to remove a wall and remodel the entire space. The facility is now clean, neat, modern, open, and ideal for shared operations that need to appeal to a broad range of individual and employer customers.

The integrated reception area is a key feature of the Workforce Development Center. As customers enter the Center, they are greeted at the reception area, and either directed to the appropriate office or asked to wait in the entrance area, where there are several new chairs, and a table stocked with the daily local paper and weekly regional papers. Customers are also encouraged to use the self-service offerings in the Resource Room (directly across from the reception area) while they wait. Although the current arrangement is aesthetically pleasing, partners are considering moving the reception area inside the Resource Room to encourage more customers to use the facilities there. Currently, although the Resource Room is in plain view of the waiting area, few customers are choosing to use it on their own initiative. Most sit or stand in the reception area while awaiting staffed services. When the appropriate staff member is available, customers are escorted or directed to the relevant office to receive services.

Since individual program/agency identities remain fairly strong at the Creston Center, customers received service only from staff employed by the agency or program funding the service. All JTPA program staff are housed in one half of the Center, along with staff employed by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. All Job

Service staff occupy the other half of the office, along with the older worker program representative and the veterans' services representative. The cubicles in the middle of the office are shared by staff representing additional programs, including the PROMISE JOBS program, Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services, and the dislocated farmworkers program. A shared set of file drawers are centrally located in the rear of the office. Shared production and supply rooms and an employee cafeteria are located on the JTPA side of the facility. A shared classroom/workshop room is located on the Job Service side.

Although the integrated reception function is seen as key to supporting the further integration of functions among Center staff, the current receptionist is also assigned other responsibilities and is not always available to greet customers when they enter the Center. Despite the program-specific allocation of space within the Center, individual offices do not have signs indicating the location of different programs. This makes it difficult for customers to find where they need to go when the receptionist is not at her desk. Customers who are not greeted at the door may end up walking around the Center searching for their case manager. To remedy the problem of lack of formal program signs, the PROMISE JOBS staff have hung temporary paper signs over their individual offices.

Partners are currently in the process of figuring out how to make decisions about a variety of issues related to sharing the physical facility. These issues include allocating desks and offices to staff who are present at the Center only part of the week; purchasing Center-wide equipment, supplies, and furniture; scheduling use of the single classroom space; sharing file space; and, in some cases, sharing individual case files. Currently there is no common lunchroom or conference room space outside of the classroom. Staff also are wrestling with whether and how to make additional Center space available for use by job seekers or employers (e.g., for employer interviews with prospective workers).

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

Prior to the One-Stop initiative, the core partners were housed in different buildings. Although the partners are currently co-located, the program and agency divisions that existed under the old system still manifest themselves in the shared office space: Job Service occupies one side of the building and JTPA the other. Although coordination among the core partners is a strong feature of the Creston Center, current job assignments still follow programmatic, rather than functional, lines. With the exception of the reception staff and an administrative assistant/MIS liaison, both of whom are engaged in Center-wide operations, staff have not been cross-trained or assigned to perform integrated job functions across programs.

Initial planning efforts have attempted to identify areas of expertise associated with the different Center partners with a view toward eventual specialization by functional area when and if further cross-agency integration occurs. For example, staff have identified Job Service as having expertise in placement, labor market information, and unemployment compensation. JTPA has been identified as having expertise in rapid response to dislocations, job development, and on-the-job training. Ultimately, staff may be assigned to new positions by function rather than by program, in keeping with the assessment of expertise.

Capacity Building

The Center Director and the majority of the Center staff are aware of the state's efforts to support the transformation of individual employment and training programs into integrated workforce development centers through a coordinated capacity-building effort. Although the development of One-Stop training curricula was perceived as an appropriate state-level function, local staff in Creston expressed a desire to be more regularly informed about the state's training plans.

In Creston, local staff indicated two areas in which staff training is critically needed: (1) team building; and (2) use of technology. Study respondents indicated a high level of interest in formal training about the roles of different Center partners and how to work in teams. Staff training in team building would clearly support the long-term transformation of individual programs into integrated Center operations.

Training in new technologies, ranging from basic computer literacy to use of the Internet, new information systems, and the resources available in the Resource Room, is another critical need area. Currently, many staff are reluctant to refer customers to the Resource Room because the Center lacks the staff support to assist customers in using the available resources. Moreover, although staff are aware of the state's emphasis on technology-based services as a key component of its One-Stop vision, many staff at the Creston Center expressed skepticism that technology-based products could revitalize the public employment and training system. Clearly, local staff require more information about the new technology-based products they will be receiving from the state so that they will be effective in sharing the technology with customers.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Local respondents view management information systems as important tools to support developing integrated workforce development services. Early in the local One-Stop planning process, local partners identified developing an integrated intake form and process as a high priority for supporting the operation of the Center. The Creston partners requested funding from the state's second year One-Stop Implementation Grant to support the development of an integrated intake process that could be used by all local partners including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. However, this request was turned down by the state, because the state did not want to support the development of a different integrated intake process for each of the 16 local areas in the state.

Most staff at the Creston Center are now aware of Iowa's participation in a multi-state consortium developing integrated intake and case management systems for use across different workforce development programs. Fewer local staff are aware of the comprehensive nature of the state's information technology plan, which includes the construction of a statewide state-administered fiber optics network called the Iowa Communications Network.[8]

At the local level, the need for improved information exchange among local partners is evident. At the present time, although there are information-sharing agreements in place between some partners and programs, including agreements between Job Service and JTPA to share the case files of common customers, not all local staff have access to information that would help them serve shared customers. For example, the Center partners lack an automated information system to support coordinated services for employer customers. Currently informal communication channels are the only mechanism for insuring that different job developers do not contact the same employer.

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[8] The ICN is on its way to becoming operational, having achieved at least one point of presence in every county. In the Creston area, Southwestern Community College maintains the connection.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

At the state level, Iowa is investing in the creation of new automated user-friendly databases of information on careers, labor markets, and training opportunities. However, Creston staff are not yet convinced that these new products will be viewed as useful resources by employers or individual job-seeking customers. Perceived barriers to their use include the small number of local employers and an apparent customer aversion to the impersonal nature of automated services.[9] Responses by Creston staff, described below, reveal that the state of Iowa needs to devote substantial energy to marketing its LMI products to the staff of local Centers such as Creston.

Local staff also expressed concern over the accuracy of existing LMI data. For example, there is widespread perception among staff that reported local unemployment rates are highly inaccurate. This perception encourages a high level of skepticism about other labor market information as well. Staff expressed concern that the increasing sophistication of the new automated information systems will obscure the questionable quality of the data.

In addition, there was great concern among staff that new products being developed by the state would be skewed toward serving *highly* skilled job seekers, even though the state welfare-to-work initiative is expected to vastly increase the number of *low*-skilled job-seekers. Staff also indicated that customers at the Creston Center would find the information provided by these systems less useful than customers at other Centers because most job seekers in the Creston area are unwilling to relocate for new jobs. Moreover, because the community is relatively small, and the number of employers few, most job-seekers are aware of the major employers already. Staff doubt that customers will use new LMI products to locate potential employers.

Staff did express mild enthusiasm however, for a particular application of new LMI products: to support local school-to-work initiatives. The Creston Center hopes to evolve into a resource for local schools and vocational education programs. New LMI products would support this initiative in two ways: (1) the data could assist young people in developing career plans; and (2) high-tech delivery mechanisms will be likely to appeal to these young customers.

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[9] Although the Center has automated ALEX job listings, customers still use the hard copy "paper" job boards to get information about available jobs. Almost no one currently uses the computers to look up job descriptions, even though it would be far more efficient for customers to review these descriptions before asking a staff person for help.

Marketing

Marketing is a new activity for the staff of the Creston Center. Local staff have responded positively to One-Stop marketing advice and technical assistance from the state staff. However, before engaging in a large-scale marketing campaign, local partners want to create a more stable and cohesive internal Center environment. Although the core partners currently collaborate extensively, a number of partners expressed concern about marketing an integrated Center before full-scale integration had actually occurred.

At the time of the site visit, marketing efforts were also on hold because local staff were still waiting for the state to make some final decisions about the use of the state One-Stop logo. There was some question about whether the state logo developed for One-Stop was going to be used to represent the multi-agency One-Stop initiative or the newly established Department of Workforce Development. At the time of the site visit, the state logo was being used in the signage identifying the Creston Workforce Development Center. The logo was also used on some Center letterhead, but not yet on all of the fax cover sheets and other business forms. Until the state clarifies the appropriate use of the state logo, the Creston Center staff do not want to confuse potential customers by making widespread use of the logo to represent the Creston Center.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

"Core" services currently available to customers at the Creston Workforce Development Center include:

- *Access to job listings and job matching services* through the ALEX system, using on-site terminals. Access to ALEX is also available through a kiosk in a local grocery store.
- *Application for and receipt of UI benefits.*
- *Access to self-service labor market information*, through written and automated information in the Resource Center.
- *Testing/assessment.* Customers eligible for categorical programs may receive a formal battery of tests. In addition, a self-driven assessment program called Jumpstart is available in the Resource Room.

- *Self-service career planning activities* within the Resource Room, including CHOICES, which includes career interest information as well as information about local training providers, and a library of career-related videos.
- *Self-service training and job search training* activities within the Resource Room, including use of resume preparation software and keyboarding training.
- *Written information on local employers and training providers*, through CHOICES software, as well as through brochures and assorted materials available within the Resource Room.
- *Information about and referral to available community services* including training resources and family support services. Information and referral is provided by reception staff and through written materials in the Resource Room.

Many of these services, particularly the self-driven services, have been developed as part of the One-Stop initiative. The staff of the individual partner programs still require training on the self-driven services in order to direct their customers to the programs from which they would benefit most.

At the time of the site visit, there was considerable uncertainty among Center staff about which services were available to the general public and which were limited to customers of specific categorical programs. Services currently limited to selected customers based on individual eligibility include the following:

- *Individualized service planning, counseling, and case management services* are reserved for participants in Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services, JTPA economically disadvantaged or dislocated worker programs, older worker programs, and PROMISE JOBS (welfare to work).
- *Group job search training/job clubs* are reserved for participants in the PROMISE JOBS program.
- *Placement in on-the-job training* is reserved for participants in JTPA programs.
- *Tuition and supportive service payments* is reserved for participants enrolled in training through PROMISE JOBS and JTPA. However, due to funding shortages, no new customers have been enrolled in occupational training in PROMISE JOBS for the last two years.

Services for Employer Customers

Local staff at the Creston Center have not yet developed new services for employer customers. Although such services have been discussed among staff, and staff of different categorical programs have begun to share information about local employers on a more regular basis in order to prevent duplication of services, the Center has not yet developed a clear strategy about what new services to develop for employers or how to market them to employers.

Currently, Center staff post job listings and provide referrals, initial screening, and testing for employers when appropriate. However, over the long term, Center staff hope to serve employers better as a result of increased Center participation in local economic development initiatives and school-to-work initiatives. Staff associated with the Center feel that improved regional linkages with school-to-work and economic development initiatives offer tremendous promise to transform the Center from a resource for job seekers into a resource for labor exchange and training more broadly. By marketing job seekers on a regional basis and encouraging local K-12 schools to include career education as an important element of primary and secondary education, the Center hopes to help both existing and new employers locate job seekers that meet their needs.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

Because many of the planned changes to the workforce development service system had not yet occurred at the time of the site visit, the customers to whom we spoke still considered themselves the clients of a particular agency and program, rather than of an integrated workforce development system. As part of the One-Stop evaluation site visit, informal discussions were held with customers of Job Service's job placement services and participants in the PROMISE JOBS program for AFDC recipients.

All customers praised the services they were receiving. Most indicated that they were treated with respect and that staff were helpful and supportive. However, customers did not seem to have very high expectations about the quality or sophistication of the services they received. Most were unaware, prior to enrolling in their respective programs, that such services were available at all through the public sector. They were, therefore, grateful for whatever assistance they received and hesitant to request additional services.

Customers enrolled in intensive services through targeted programs expressed particularly high levels of enthusiasm for their case managers. Customers enrolled in long-term training programs greatly appreciated the case managers' thoughtfulness, patience, and support.

Customers who had had contact with workforce development services over an extended period commented favorably on the new decor and remodeling process, but most were unaware of the Center's effort to "reinvent" its services and service-delivery strategies. This is not surprising, because the Creston Center is still early in this transformation process. However, customers who were aware of the Center's transformation efforts understood the reforms to be the result of federal and state budget reductions rather than part of an overall strategy to improve workforce development services to individual and employer customers.

Employers

Several employers who participated in a focus group discussion during the evaluation site visit expressed interest in the development of new employer-oriented services. However, respondents were not aware of the intended statewide transformation of public workforce development services as part of the One-Stop initiative. They reported "being asked more questions" by Workforce Development staff, but were unaware of any substantial changes in the available services. Because many local firms have recently downsized, private sector human resources staff often lack the capacity they once had to recruit new employees. As a result, employers have become more interested in receiving assistance in the hiring process from the public sector. The fact that the Center will provide screened referrals free of charge was cited as a major incentive for local employers to use the public system.

Additionally, employers expressed enthusiasm for public involvement in school-to-work initiatives, to address the difficulty they are currently having in finding new recruits with good work-readiness skills. Employers also indicated their interest in attracting hard-working young people into their firms so they could train them and "move [them] up through the ranks." They indicated that the Center might play an important role in the local labor exchange by facilitating career education and internship/externship opportunities for students leaving high school.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The federal One-Stop Implementation Grant was a clear catalyst in getting state and local One-Stop planners to begin redesigning workforce development services and service delivery mechanisms in the state of Iowa. However, because the state has promised to implement large-scale change in a relatively short length of time, local Workforce Development Centers are springing up throughout the state even though the concept of service integration and transformed services is not well understood and is highly controversial at the local level. Marketing the One-Stop vision internally and overcoming internal staff resistance to the One-Stop initiative will be a challenge for both the state and local sites in the coming months. In Creston, the solid personal relationships among local partners and the close-knit nature of the community provide a foundation upon which agreement about transformed services can be achieved.

Confusion about the relative roles of the state and the local partners in the design of One-Stop centers has also influenced the evolution of the Creston Workforce Development Center. Although the state has encouraged local sites to develop local One Stop systems that are responsive to their particular needs, local areas are dependent on the state for many of the self-service technologies and management information systems upon which One-Stop services will be built. Where state control ends and local discretion begins is not yet well established.

The staff of the Creston Workforce Development Center have approached the One-Stop initiative with varying levels of enthusiasm. Although good communication and coordination are strong features of the Creston Center, staff have not yet achieved a well-developed blueprint for integrated workforce development services. To further support the next stages of service transformation, all staff would benefit from capacity building in the areas of teamwork and technology use, both of which have the potential to assist the partners in identifying common objectives and moving toward integrated services.

APPENDIX I

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
DES MOINES, IOWA
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During May 1996

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
DES MOINES, IOWA
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 8/2/96

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
DES MOINES, IOWA
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

As part of its One-Stop initiative, the state of Iowa has set a goal of developing a One-Stop center within each of the state's 16 SDAs. The Workforce Development Center in Des Moines (Des Moines WDC) was designated as the official One-Stop center within SDA 11, an 8-county service delivery area. The Center received funding from both the first and second year federal One-Stop implementation grant to further One-Stop development.

The planning and development of a One-Stop center in Des Moines builds on the pre-existing co-location of many workforce development partners and programs in a single facility in downtown Des Moines. Among the early goals of the One-Stop center were *increasing the flow of information among partners* to increase each agency's familiarity with what other agencies do and *facilitating inter-agency coordination on behalf of common clients*. However, the current One-Stop initiative has evolved far beyond physical co-location and coordination of services to individual clients to include *coordination of planning and budget initiatives* among workforce development partners throughout the region (whether or not the partners have a physical presence within the One-Stop center) as well as *consolidation and integration of selected functions* among the co-located partners.

Several key variables are influencing the context within which the local One-Stop vision is emerging and taking shape. These include: (1) an extremely low unemployment rate; (2) support for a strong work ethic within the state's welfare-to-work initiative; (3) a decline in funding for the individual agencies participating in the One-Stop initiative; and (4) uncertainty about the organizational structures that will ultimately emerge for workforce development programs at the state and local levels. Each of these is briefly described below.

- *Polk County, which contains Des Moines, has an extremely low unemployment rate, under 3%.* This influences both the types of customers seeking assistance from the public workforce development system and the needs of local employers. In this tight labor market, the clientele that has traditionally sought public employment services are low-wage, low-skill manual laborers. Job seekers with more attractive skills are likely to have little difficulty finding new jobs. On the other hand, employers have difficulty finding qualified workers and complain of high rates of employee turnover.

One of the questions raised by the One-Stop initiative is whether the public system can design services that will attract a broader range of job seekers and employers. More recently, as a result of corporate downsizing, the public workforce development system is beginning to serve professional workers who are seeking assistance in finding new jobs. These customers are requesting a broader range of services, including help with career planning and development, rather than "just a job." These more highly skilled workers are very attractive to local employers.

- *There is strong public and agency support for the state's welfare-to-work initiative—PROMISE JOBS— which calls for participants to move rapidly toward full-time employment.* To encourage the transition from welfare to work, the program offers transitional benefits and supportive services to assist families to leave public assistance. Because of the strong work philosophy guiding this program, extended post-secondary training prior to employment is no longer encouraged for the welfare population, although basic education to complete high school equivalency is strongly urged.
- *A number of the partner programs and agencies, including ES, UI, and VETS have experienced substantial funding cuts in recent years.* Staff responsible for the ES, UI, and VETS functions feel overwhelmed by the high volume of customers they are expected to serve with ever-reduced levels of staff. As a result, staff are very interested in consolidating staffing for common functions shared with other workforce development partners (e.g., job development and employer services) and reducing duplication of effort.
- *There is currently considerable uncertainty over the organizational arrangements for the planning and delivery of One-Stop services at both the state and local levels.* Staff concerns about job security, wages, benefits, and overall control issues among the local partners make it difficult for the different entities participating in the Des Moines WDC to focus on an integrated team effort. If local partners are required to compete for local workforce development dollars (as suggested by the director of the new state Workforce Development Department), it is not yet clear which local partners would join a consortium and which would choose to compete against each other.

These factors have helped to shape a local One-Stop initiative that is attempting to provide improved labor exchange services to employers and job seekers alike by looking for overlapping functions across the participating workforce development partners. As described below, the common functions selected for initial consolidation efforts include: customer reception, testing/assessment, employer services, and job placement. Although integration of services is driven strongly by a desire to achieve economies of scale in the face of reduced funding levels, improved customer service is also a clear local objective, as expressed by the Center's vision statement:

> "The Workforce Development Center's mission is to assist individuals in meeting their economic and social needs."

This vision does not yet encompass the forging of a single Center identity or the development of detailed goals and objectives for the Workforce Development Center as a whole. However, some partners recognize that the vision may ultimately evolve into "total functional integration" and an integrated workforce development business identity.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Recent state legislation creating an integrated state Workforce Development Department(WDD) and Workforce Development Board (WDB) also calls for the creation of *Regional Advisory Boards* to (1) advise the state WDD and WDB about regional workforce development needs, (2) assist in decisions about the state award of grants or contracts for the delivery of regional workforce development services, and (3) monitor the performance of local service providers. Regional Advisory Board members will be appointed by the governor based on recommendations submitted by local elected officials. Regional boards will include business and labor representatives, as well as a county elected official, municipal elected official, and a community college representative.

The role planned for Regional Advisory Boards is consistent with the state's plan to become a "broker" rather than a direct provider of local workforce development services in the future. Under the competitive model laid out in the legislation and promoted by the new WDD director, existing public workforce development agencies such as local Wagner-Peyser and JTPA administrative entities will be able to compete for service contracts with other non-governmental entities. Local partners could compete against each other or form a consortium to apply for designation as the local workforce development service provider.

At the level of day-to-day program planning and administration, the partners in the Des Moines WDC have responded to the state's encouragement of an *inclusive* process for local One-Stop planning and administration. A "*Partners' Group*," including senior staff from all local agencies that operate one or more major public workforce development program, is responsible for joint administration of the Center. The Partners' Group currently meets every other week to address issues of common concern and plan for the integration of selected core services. All workforce development agencies participating in the Partner's Group are committed to an integrated local planning process. "Core partners" are moving rapidly beyond coordinated planning to the development of integrated service functions. Partners that are not yet ready to participate in integrated service functions (because of philosophical, practical, or legislative/regulatory barriers) are welcome to participate as "non-core partners" in common planning and coordination efforts.

There are eight core partners in the Des Moines Workforce Development Center, as follows:

- *Iowa Department of Employment Security (DES)* is about to become part of the new integrated Workforce Development Department. Programs operated by DES in the local Des Moines office include UI, Wagner-Peyser-funded activities (ES), and VETS services. DES is also a contractor for the state's PROMISE JOBS program for AFDC recipients (which it operates jointly with the local JTPA Title II administrative entity).
- *The Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (CIETC)* is the local administrative entity for the delivery of services under JTPA Title II. This agency is currently a local contractor of the State Department of Economic Development but will soon become a contractor of the new integrated Workforce Development Department when it takes over state-level administration of JTPA services. CIETC is also a partner with DES in the operation of the PROMISE JOBS program for AFDC recipients. All CIETC staff are housed at the WDC.
- *United Way* operates the local Dislocated Worker Center, as the designated JTPA Title III administrative entity. United Way also shares responsibility for the delivery of reemployment services to UI profiles in combination with DES. The Dislocated Worker Center is not co-located at the WDC because its staff needs room to grow and shrink

(through accessing discretionary grants) as the need for dislocated worker services changes, but one staff responsible for reemployment services to UI profiles is outstationed at the WDC.

- *The Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC)* covers 11 counties and has multiple campuses within the Des Moines metropolitan area as well as in outlying counties. At the One-Stop Center, DMACC leases classroom space for two ABE/GED classes. At the main DMACC campus, the college houses an *Economic Development Group* that provides employee retraining services to expanding and relocating businesses.
- *Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVR).* Although DVR has a staff person outstationed at the Center part-time and is represented on the Partners' Group, DVR has been prevented by legislative/regulatory barriers from participating in plans for consolidated staffing of core services.
- *Green Thumb* is a private non-profit agency that operates Iowa's federally-funded Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V, Older Americans Act). Agency staff are housed at the Center.
- *Goodwill Industries* is a private non-profit agency that serves individuals with serious barriers to employment using funding from the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the state Department of Human Services. Services administered by staff located at the Center include work experience and job coaching.
- *Dynamic Educational Systems, Inc. (DESI)* is a private non-profit agency that operates several Job Corps Centers in Iowa. Administrative staff for this program are housed at the Center.

Each of the partners listed above has at least some staff housed at the Center and participates in the Partners' Group. Each of the core partners, with the exception of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, is participating in plans for the consolidation of one or more service functions.

Additional "non-core" partners with an on-site presence at the Center include:

- *Area Agency on Aging.* An older worker specialist with the state-funded Retired Iowan Community Employment Program (RICEP) is housed within the DES offices at the Center, but does not have separate representation on the Partners' Group.
- *Lyric Vocational Counseling Services.* This private for-profit agency receives referrals to serve DVR and Veterans' Administration rehabilitation clients. Although this business rents space at the Center, it is not a voting member of the Partners' Group.

- *The Volunteer Mentoring Program.* This statewide program is represented in the Center by a half-time Vista volunteer. The program matches PROMISE JOBS clients in need of support to volunteer mentors.

Affiliated agencies that coordinate activities with WDC partners but are not currently considered partners in the WDC include:

- *The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS).* This agency is active in One-Stop planning at the state level, but is not an active participant in the operation of the Des Moines Workforce Development Center. Although DHS contracts with DES and CIETC for the operation of the PROMISE JOBS program, no income maintenance case workers are located at the Center.
- *Iowa Department for the Blind*, the sister agency to DVR, provides blindness adjustment services to individuals with new visual impairments. While interested in coordinated planning with WDC partners, this agency is not co-located or represented on the local Partners' Group.
- *Polk County Social Services* and the *YWCA* each operate Family Development and Self Sufficiency (FaDSS) programs that provide intensive case management services to individuals with serious barriers to self-sufficiency. Although clients are referred to FaDSS from the PROMISE JOBS program, FaDSS providers are not co-located at the Center.

In summary, the organization of the One-Stop initiative in the Des Moines Workforce Development Center is characterized by (1) co-location of a wide variety of public and non-governmental workforce development agencies and organizations, (2) commitment to a common inter-agency planning process guided by a joint administrative steering committee referred to as the Partners' Group, and (3) participation by a group of "core partners" in planning for the consolidation of a selected set of core services. Future state-level decisions about the selection and certification of local workforce development service providers may transform the local delivery framework, if a competitive RFP process is used.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Current mechanisms for local communication and coordination to support One-Stop development include bi-weekly Partners' Group meetings in which agency administrators participate, as well as meetings of four planning committees composed of agency administrators and some line staff. The key inter-agency planning committees include: Customer Service, Assessment, Employer Services, and Job Development. Each of these committees are developing proposals for the integration of selected services across the participating agencies for consideration by the full Partners' Group.

Several respondents indicated that planning and communication about system transformation has been limited to a relative small number of key individuals from each of the participating partners. A group of partners concerned with marketing the WDC (described below) indicated that one of the most pressing marketing issues is how to "sell" the One-Stop concept to line staff within the partner agencies, many of whom are fearful of how One-Stop implementation will affect their job security, working conditions, and wages and benefits. Participation by line staff in reconnaissance trips to One-Stop centers in Wisconsin appeared to be an effective way for staff representing a variety of perspectives within the WDC to be exposed to the One-Stop concept.

All partners emphasized the need for improved day-to-day communication among staff in different partner agencies, including electronic mail and the sharing of client-level and administrative databases. In the absence of such communication tools, efforts to forge inter-agency trust and the sense of a common enterprise are hampered. Although all partners say they are now much more aware of what other partner agencies do, most staff are still primarily involved with their own agency's programs, rather than having a detailed overview of the Center as a whole. Even the DES Executive Officer for the PROMISE JOBS program, who coordinated the site visit, indicated it was extremely valuable for her to sit in on the local site interviews for the evaluation because they gave her a new understanding of everything that happens within the Center.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

The partners within the Des Moines WDC have approached the sharing of resources by making informal in-kind contributions of staff and equipment to operate shared functions, rather than by formally pooling funds. The cost of the shared facility is covered through sublease agreements between the co-located agencies and DES, which is the local leaseholder. Lease agreements cover the cost of the physical facility and operating costs (e.g. utilities, phones). For some agencies, the lease agreement also includes a fee to cover agency access to DES equipment, such as the copy machine.

To date, the only funds that have been formally earmarked for the WDC as a whole, rather than for one of its constituent programs or agencies, are the One-Stop Implementation Grant awards provided by the state for One-Stop system development. The Center received $25,000 from the state's first-year One-Stop grant for remodeling costs to create the physical infrastructure for an integrated "customer reception desk" for the entry area of the WDC. A second-year grant of $69,500 was received for the furbishing of an integrated Assessment Center to be staffed and used by all core partner agencies. The Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (CIETC) is the local fiscal agent for these funds, which are to be expended following plans developed and approved by the Partners' Group.

Additional in-kind contributions have been provided by the participating partners to support shared facilities. For example, DES has paid for the development and staffing of the Resource Center, which is available to customers from all agencies. DMACC has provided on-site ABE/GED classes using a combination of ABE and general college funds. For the staffing of the new Assessment Center, all partners are being asked to contribute staff to help operate the center. In exchange, all participating agencies will be able to refer their clients for a core set of tests at no additional per test charge. Partners that do not help staff the Assessment Center will be charged for use of all assessment services.

Thus, to date, the development of the WDC has been furthered through an informal bartering process, whereby each participating agency offers something of value in exchange for mutual benefits. For example, in the furbishing of the Assessment Center, the community college provided the carpeting, DESI (the Job Corps administrator) arranged for the carpet installation, DES provided the glue for the carpet, while CIETC traded in some old furniture to get the modular wall dividers that separate the Assessment Center from the surrounding space. Although this process has facilitated the development of shared resources, it has not been used to forge a unified Center identity among participating partners. Rather, each partner has retained its separate identity as well as its separate funding streams.

Following a different paradigm, DES and DMACC are working together to develop and market enhanced assessment/testing and placement services to local employers. Revenues obtained from these new lines of business (described in more detail later) will be retained on behalf of the Center as a whole, rather than allocated to any particular partner agency.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

When different workforce development agencies first co-located at 215 Keo Way in May 1994, the local design for a One-Stop center was described as a "career arcade" with co-located services for the ease of customers, but few expectations for consolidation of services across partner agencies. The PROMISE JOBS program was a precursor of inter-agency "partnering" between DES and CIETC, but even this co-administered program assigned each participating agency responsibility for a different aspect or phase of services to JOBS participants.

The catalyst for a new design for integrated service delivery was the preparation of the state's One-Stop Implementation Grant application in the summer of 1994. As part of the planning process, state and local partners began to conduct an analysis of common functions or "lines of business" shared across workforce development partners. As a result of this planning exercise, the state identified eleven different core services: career planning, career preparation, occupational skills development, job placement services, community services information and referral, employer technical assistance and training, UI services, labor market information dissemination, worker transition assistance, access to support services, and access to targeted workforce development programs.

After reviewing the potential for inter-agency integration of different lines of business, partners in the Des Moines WDC identified five activities in which there was commonality or overlap across multiple agency partners: customer reception, testing/assessment, case management, job development, and employer services.[1] Each of these activities except case management was selected for efforts to plan for integration of services across agency partners. Because it seemed too ambitious for the initial planning effort, integration of the case management function was deferred to a later date. Initial plans targeted July 1, 1996 as the target date for the implementation of integrated services in the Des MoinesWDC.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

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[1] These activities do not correspond exactly to the lines of business identified at the state level. Some services targeted for integration in the Des Moines WDC are narrower than the generic lines of business (e.g., testing/assessment is narrower than career planning); others, such as customer reception and case management are not considered lines of business according to the state framework.

Universal Access

Although they support the concept of *Universal Access*, staff involved in the One-Stop planning process are concerned about how to simultaneously preserve services to their current customer base and reach out to new customers, given cutbacks in partner agency staffing levels. They would, however, like to change the image of the Center in the minds of both employers and individual customers so that they are perceived as offering "value-added" services and employer access to a range of workers from lower- to higher-skilled.

Despite the stated goal of making services more attractive to a wider range of customers, the partners have not yet developed a clear service delivery strategy to reach additional customers. The Des Moines WDC has been slow to embrace self-service options as the key to providing services to an increasing volume and range of workforce development customers. Although large numbers of customers use the ALEX automated system to review available job listings, Center staff must screen the appropriateness of each referral before releasing the name of the employer and information about how to apply for the job. Self-service and guided-service opportunities are available on-site through the written and automated information in the DES Resource Center, as well as through dial-in access to the state's DES Data Center, an automated bulletin board that lists job openings and labor market information. However automated self-service options are not emphasized as the delivery mode for large numbers of workforce development customers in this Center. The Center estimates that approximately 150 customers use the Resource Center each week, compared to an estimated 400 to 450 customers who visit the Center for services every day.

Improving Center identification and visibility is also recognized as an important key to make Center services accessible to a broader customer base. Even if customers are aware of one of the partner's services and want to find the Center, the building is not currently well marked. Staff say customers have sometimes complained "I ran out of gas driving around looking for you." Other issues identified as relevant to improving accessibility are increased hours of operation, improved availability of parking, and improved ability to address the needs of non-English-speaking customers. The Center is currently open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. All partners agree that longer hours would be desirable. Limited parking is also currently an issue limiting ease of access by Center customers. In addition, DES staff have identified a need to develop additional Spanish language materials and services. For example, they indicated that it would be very beneficial to develop a Spanish language recording on the telephone call-in line used by UI recipients to report wages earned during the previous week.

Customer Choice

The presence of a variety of partner agencies and programs on-site as well as in additional locations throughout the 8-county service delivery area provides WDC customers with some choices about where and how to access services. Upon arriving at the Des Moines WDC, customers are "guided" to appropriate services by Center staff. Initial reception staff at the customer service desk, case managers/counselors for individual categorical programs, and soon-to-be-integrated job placement staff are responsible for making sure that customers receive services appropriate to their needs. At the state level, Iowa is investing heavily in the improvement of automated, user-friendly menu-driven labor market information products and job listings/resume banks to support customer self-service options.

As described above, self-service delivery is not yet stressed as a way to increase customer choice at the local level. Nevertheless, the DES Resource Center offers a promising small-scale beginning in the provision of a variety of self-service resources, including access to computers and software applications for resume development, typing and 10-key data entry practice and testing/self-certification, as well as access to written, computer-based, and video-based information on careers and job search methods.

Integrated Services

In response to the federal goal of *Integrated Services*, the core partners in the Des Moines WDC are currently working on plans to integrate the common functions of customer reception, testing/assessment, job placement, and employer services. The integration of these functions is viewed as a strategy to reduce duplication of effort across partners. Ideally, integration of these services will enable individual partner agencies to enhance the content of other customer services, through the realization of cost savings.

The Customer Service Committee has developed plans for the integration of the customer reception function through the creation of an integrated "customer services desk" staffed by workers from each of the participating partners. These staff will be cross-trained in UI screening, ES registration, services available from other partners, and will be able to perform the first stage of intake and referral for all incoming customers, including completion of ES/UI registration. Registration for other programs will continue to be performed by the staff of the individual categorical programs.

The Assessment Committee, under the leadership of DMACC, has prepared detailed plans for an integrated Assessment Center. This Center will be operated by staff assigned from each of the partner agencies, who will be cross-trained to conduct a common set of tests, including assessments of aptitudes, interests, general basic skills, work-related basic skills, and personality traits. The plan is for each participating agency to refer customers for specific tests. The referring agency will continue to provide test interpretation and ongoing service planning and case management to each customer. As long as the referring agency contributes staff to the operation of the Assessment Center, tests will be performed free of charge.

The Job Development Committee, representing individuals responsible for job development/placement functions in the different partner agencies have been wrestling with how to define and plan for an integrated job development function. The current plan is to create an integrated Job Development Team that will serve integrated caseloads of WDC customers identified as job ready. The primary function of these placement specialists will be to enter and service job orders provided by employers and match job applicants to available job orders.

The Employer Services Committee (which recognizes that the employer services function substantially overlaps the job development function) has identified an "account representative" system as a desirable way to organize employer contacts, so each employer feels that it has continuity of staff contacts over time. The Committee has also worked to design a "second tier" of employer services that are "value added" services to assist employers with particular worker recruitment, screening, and training needs. As described in more detail under the Employer Services section, these include: (1) expanded outsourced human resource functions provided by employer specialists on a fee-for-service basis, (2) development of an expanded Employers' Resource Center with information about hiring, training, and business consulting assistance and services; and (3) provision of assistance to firms interested in training groups of new or incumbent workers.

In addition to plans currently underway for sharing common functions, customers from all partner agencies are invited to use the Resource Center developed with Wagner-Peyser funds and staffed by DES.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

To further the federal goal of a *Performance-Driven Outcome-Based* system, the local area is following the state's lead in documenting One-Stop accomplishments, establishing performance measures, and tracking improvements over time. However, because the WDC is not yet perceived as a single business enterprise in Des Moines, the issue of how to measure its joint accomplishments is not yet a relevant issue for most local partners.

Barriers to system-level accountability include the absence of an integrated identity for the partner agencies, as well as the absence of an integrated information system that can support the collection and analysis of information on services to "system" customers. The state is currently investing substantial energy in developing a prototype integrated client-level management information system.

Local staff expressed support for the principles of ongoing customer feedback and continuous improvement. The Des Moines area recently participated in a national customer satisfaction survey of ES customers and staff implemented as part of the ES Revitalization initiative. However, respondents indicated that, since they were still developing the local One-Stop system, investing heavily in customer feedback at this time might be "putting the cart before the horse."

Physical Facilities

The Des Moines Workforce Development Center is housed in a two-story office building in downtown Des Moines. The Department of Employment Security holds a ten-year lease to the building and rents space to the other local partners. When local workforce development agencies began to share this space in May 1994, they did not have plans to operate an integrated service center. Although the physical layout is not ideal for shared operations, local partners are making physical adaptations as they go along to support plans for consolidated functions.

An integrated customer service desk is key to the plan for integrated Center operations. Currently, customers seeking assistance with UI applications, ES registration, and/or assistance finding a job approach a unified ES/UI reception desk opposite the main entry on the first floor. On busy days, the line at the reception desk extends out the door. Customers seeking services from PROMISE JOBS, JTPA, or the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program are referred to a separate reception desk on the second floor. Customers seeking services from another local partner agency are currently expected to go directly to the offices occupied by staff from that agency. As part of the integration of reception functions across agencies, the Center partners are planning to move the first-floor reception desk farther into the main reception room to accommodate the customer flow and cross-staff the reception function so that this desk will serve the initial reception and intake needs of all "first-time" Center customers.

Return customers are often able to go directly to the part of the building that is appropriate to their service needs. One of the physical design issues that Center staff are currently debating is whether to maintain the "open" nature of the entire building, or whether to maintain any "secure" areas where customers would need to be accompanied by staff. This is a particular problem in trying to plan for extended hours of operation of some functions on evenings or weekends.

Adjacent to the first-floor customer reception desk is a large room that doubles as the DES waiting room and job search room. Along one wall are comfortable chairs and couches. Along the opposite wall are tables and chairs in front of 9 computer terminals where individuals can look up information on available jobs within Iowa (via the ALEX database) and one terminal at which users can access information about jobs throughout the U.S. (via America's Job Bank). One corner of this room is a "kid's corner" with books and games for children and a large aquarium with tropical fish. ES/UI staff are housed in individual cubicles off the waiting room or down adjacent hallways.

Down the hallway from the reception desk is the Resource Center, a pleasant room with four computer work stations for use by all Center customers interested in using resume preparation software, taking self-administered typing or 10-key skills tests, or accessing automated information about careers. The Resource Center also has written materials on a variety of topics including career information, job search techniques, and training resources, as well as a multi-media center with video offerings on a variety of topics.

The remainder of the first floor includes offices for staff from other partner agencies, two spacious rooms remodeled by DMACC for use as ABE/GED classrooms, and a large interior space (with no windows) designated as the new shared Assessment Center. Several conference rooms are also available on the first floor. Upstairs space includes offices for the staff associated with JTPA and PROMISE JOBS. Two upstairs classrooms are used for PROMISE JOBS orientations, job clubs, and weekly "job fairs." Interviewing rooms are available for use by employers who want to conduct on-site interviews with prospective employees.

Among the challenges faced by Center partners with respect to the current facility are a limited amount of free parking for use by customers and some difficulties with interior noise control, due to the use of modular partitions to separate the new Assessment Center operations from existing staff offices. Despite these challenges, most partners appear to be enthusiastic about the benefits of co-location and the potential for integrated functions. Nevertheless, at present, the Center is more accurately described as a facility within which partners operate closely coordinated services, rather than as a fully integrated service center.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

Prior to the One-Stop initiative, major staff divisions within the WDC were between the JTPA and PROMISE JOBS program staff (located "upstairs") and the ES and UI program staff (located "downstairs.") The ES and UI functions have historically been highly integrated functions within the Department of Employment Security. Within PROMISE JOBS, staff from the local JTPA administrative entity and ES staff meet in joint weekly staff meetings as part of their joint responsibility for JOBS program operation, but the operational responsibilities of each agency are distinct. To date, staffing of other co-located programs, such as the Senior Community Service Employment Program, DVR, and Goodwill's services to homeless workers have been entirely separate from ES, UI, and JTPA.

As a result of the planning process for integrating Center services, plans are being developed for cross-agency "teams" to perform the integrated functions of customer service desk/reception, assessment, job development/placement, and employer service representative. Through an inter-agency planning process, a standardized job description and consolidated staff training will be developed for each of the core functions. At present, the hiring process will not be integrated; rather, each core partner agency will contribute its equitable staffing share to the integrated team. (For example, the Job Development Team will have fifteen staff, five contributed by

ES, five contributed by the local JTPA/PROMISE JOBS contractor, and five contributed by other agency partners.) Integrated placement staff will be relocated within the facility so that members of the team are housed together.

Despite plans for integrated service delivery by the present local agency partners, the entire staffing plan for the delivery of local One-Stop services might be completely transformed if the state moves to a competitive RFP process for the selection of local service providers.

Capacity Building

Cross-training of staff, which has begun in the case of specific integrated or shared resources, is proving to be an effective tool for giving WDC staff a detailed understanding of the resources available within the Center. Cross-training is also an essential part of building cross-agency work teams for shared functions. Two areas in which formal cross-training curricula have been developed are for staffing the Resource Center and the Assessment Center.

Local respondents were not familiar with the capacity building efforts currently being planned by the state One-Stop team. As discussed in the state profile, topics for which training is being developed at the state level include supports for organizational and cultural change and training to support the use of new technology-based products. In discussions with local respondents at the Des Moines WDC, staff evidenced a strong interest in team-building training. There would probably also be strong local support for technology training related to system-level accountability and communication functions (e.g., such as sending electronic mail across partners and exchanging or merging client-level information across programs). However, some local staff were not very enthusiastic about expanded technology-based labor market information products, because they did not think that individual customers would be interested in these products.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Local staff are aware of Iowa's participation in multi-state initiatives to develop integrated intake and case management systems across different workforce development programs. Although a few local respondents are participating in state-level MIS planning teams, One-Stop MIS development is perceived as a state-level function.

At the local level, the need for improved information exchange and communications systems among local partners is evident. At the present time, although there are information-sharing agreements in place between some partners and programs (e.g., between PROMISE JOBS and DHS for information on the income maintenance status of AFDC clients), not all local staff have access to case management information and job listings maintained by other agencies. Staff working for the local JTPA administrative entity do not yet have computers available at their individual work stations. Clearly standardization of MIS hardware and software remains a major implementation challenge for both the state and, ultimately, the local levels. However, at the present time, questions about what organizational structure will be used for the delivery of local workforce development services appears to take precedence over questions about the design and implementation of MIS support systems.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

Customers of the Des Moines WDC appear to be comfortable using the automated ALEX and America's Job Bank systems from terminals located within the Center to locate information about available jobs. In addition, interested customers are informed about the state's electronic bulletin board called the "DES Data Center," which individuals and businesses may access from remote personal computers via modem for information about job listings and local labor markets. Since job listings available from in-house ALEX terminals and the DES Data Center use suppressed job orders, customers must still contact an ES Job Placement Specialist for information about the identity of the employer for a specific job listing.

At the state level, Iowa is investing in the creation of new automated user-friendly databases with information on careers, labor markets, and training opportunities. However, local respondents were not particularly interested in these new products as resources for employers or individual job-seeking customers. One respondent noted that, "Local job seekers with good educational skills already know who the good local employers are and where the good jobs are. Local job seekers with poor educational preparation or more limited job histories don't care about career paths—they just want a job." This highlights a serious implementation challenge for Iowa—how to create a demand among both local workforce development staff and individual employer and job-seeker customers for new and more sophisticated LMI products.

Marketing

The local Partners' Group has identified areas of common marketing interests among Center partners, as well as the need for each participating agency to continue marketing its specific or unique products or programs to its own customers. Marketing the Center to internal customers (e.g., staff of different partner agencies) was also identified as a major priority for the coming months, since there is significant resistance to an integrated Center among line staff of some partner entities. Although partners believe it is somewhat early to develop a fully articulated marketing plan, shared marketing activities will target: (1) the general public; (2) the schools; and (3) employers.

The goal of marketing the Center to the general public is to improve overall visibility of the WDC as a place where employers and workers of all skill levels can get their needs met. Immediate marketing needs include improved name recognition and public awareness of the Center location. The need for an exterior sign identifying the Center is recognized by all local partners as a priority.[2] In addition, marketing through the schools is being pursued as a strategy to increase awareness of Center operations by young people about to enter the labor market, by arranging for a "Workforce for Teens" career awareness course to be offered at the Center for local high school credit. Marketing the Center to local employers includes two distinct efforts: providing information about the core services available free of charge, and marketing enhanced assistance with recruiting, screening, and training employees on a fee-for-service basis. One strategy being considered for marketing services to employers is to establish an "account representative" system, with one member of the inter-agency Job Development Team assigned to each employer account.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

"Core" services currently available to all customers at the Des Moines Workforce Development Center include:

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[2] After investing substantial cross-agency effort in developing the design for signage, the state requested that the project be put on hold until after the development of a logo for the merged state Workforce Development Department.

- *Access to job listings and job matching services* through ALEX and America's Job Bank using on-site terminals as well as remote access to the state's DES Data Center.
- *Application for and receipt of UI benefits.* Initial applications are processed by UI staff. Continuation requests (wage reports) may be filed over an automated telephone line.
- *Self-service access to labor market information*, through written and automated information in the Resource Center and the DES Data Center.
- *Testing/assessment.* All participating partner agencies may now refer individual customers to the Assessment Center for specified tests (from a menu that includes interests, aptitudes, general basic skills, work-related basic skills, and personality traits.)
- *Self-service career planning activities* within the Resource Center, including a CD-based program called *Choices* that describes different occupations, self-assessment software to practice and certify skills in typing and 10-key data entry, career planning videos, written career planning information for different occupations, and referral to information on starting a business.
- *Career preparation information for high school students*, provided through an 8-week curriculum offered one hour each afternoon at the Center for high school students.
- *Self-service job search training* activities within the Resource Center, including videos, written and automated job search materials, and use of resume preparation software. Resource Center staff often assist customers with resume preparation by reviewing and critiquing completed resumes.
- *Written information on local employers and training providers*, through brochures and assorted materials available within the Resource Center.
- *Access to on-site ABE/GED classes* offered 3 hours per day, 5 days per week by the local community college.
- *Referral to available community services*, including training resources and family support services by reception staff and through written materials in the Resource Center.

One of the design issues that the Partner's Group is considering is whether and how the Center might offer case management, assessment/testing, and staffed job search assistance to interested members of the general public or whether these services will be available only to participants eligible for categorical programs.

Services currently reserved for particular target groups eligible for funding from categorical programs include:

- *Individual service planning, counseling, and case management services* for participants in programs reserved for UI profiles, dislocated workers, older workers, PROMISE JOBS participants, and JTPA participants.
- *Group job search training/job clubs* for participants in PROMISE JOBS and the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program.
- *Placement in work experience and/or on-the-job training*, through JTPA or the program administered by Goodwill Industries for individuals with disabilities.
- *Financial assistance and supportive services* for skills training or basic educational services for PROMISE JOBS, dislocated workers, and JTPA Title II participants. However, occupational training funds for PROMISE JOBS have been exhausted since 1994; participants are put on a waiting list.

In addition, categorical programs such as PROMISE JOBS coordinate with several community agencies offering more intensive family support services to participants who have serious employment barriers.

Services for Employer Customers

In planning for integrated services to employers, the local Employer Services Committee has identified core "first tier" services as well as enhanced "second tier" services. First tier services include entering employer job openings into the automated job banks and making appropriate referrals. Partners plan to improve employer relations and increase the quality of first tier services by implementing an "account representative" system and conducting follow-up with employers after placement to review the appropriateness of the applicants referred.

The second tier of employer services, which is still under development, will consist of "value-added" services to employers to assist them with particular challenges in the hiring process. For instance, as a result of corporate downsizing, companies' human resources departments are very short-staffed. As a result, employers have tended to be more receptive to ideas about how public agencies could assist them in the hiring process. Partners believe that employers will be willing to pay for such assistance. Therefore the Employer Services Committee has identified several different value-added services for development:

- *An Employers' Resource Center.* This service would offer employers information about all aspects of the hiring process, including information about hiring laws and rules, information about "best practices" in recruiting, screening, and hiring new employers, and referral to technical assistance and training resources.
- *Enhanced staff support for recruiting and screening new job applicants.* This staffing service is being piloted on a fee-for-service basis with one firm that is opening a new facility in Des Moines.
- *Participation in the Work Keys[3] system*, which "profiles" the foundation skills required to do a particular job and assesses job applicants against the required skills. Employers participating in this system pay a fee to have staff "profile" a job and assess applicants' skills in up to 8 skill areas. So far four large local employers have purchased this service from the WDC.
- *Assistance with workforce training* for employers planning to expand or relocate in Iowa, through a state-funded "New Jobs" incentive program administered by the Economic Development Group at the Des Moines Area Community College. Another "value-added" service to assist employers with workforce training is a "train the trainers" program operated by the community college with participation by the local Chamber of Commerce to teach work supervisors to be effective trainers.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

Because many of the planned changes to the delivery of workforce development services have yet to be made, customers still consider themselves the clients of a particular agency and program, rather than of an integrated workforce development system. As part of the One-Stop evaluation site visit, informal discussions were held with customers of ES job placement services, UI profiling reemployment services, customers using the Resource Center, participants in the PROMISE JOBS program, and students in the ABE/GED class.

All customers sounded appreciative of the services they were receiving. Across the board, customers indicated that they were treated with respect and that staff were helpful. However, customers' expectations about the quality or sophistication of the services they received did not seem to be very high. For example, customers did not generally expect to receive individualized attention or support through the job search process.

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[3] *Work Keys* is a proprietary system developed by American College Testing (ACT) in Iowa City and licensed to organizations that are trained by ACT in its use.

Where the customer response was particularly enthusiastic, it was due in large part to staff who were both caring and skilled in their personal interactions with customers. The services provided by the Resource Center manager were perceived to be of notably high quality. Customers responded positively to the cheerful, courteous, and helpful demeanor of this individual. Her first comment to customers who may be fearful of using the computer-based materials is "Go ahead! You can't break it." Drawing on her past experiences as a teacher, this staff member empowers Center users to help themselves. Customers were also particularly enthusiastic about the ABE/GED classes, in which teachers work with students to further their individual learning goals but also encourage class members to develop strong and supportive personal relationships with each other.

Employers

Employers who participated in a focus group discussion during the evaluation site visit expressed strong interest in having the Center help them overcome the difficult challenges of finding qualified workers in the tight local labor market. Employer respondents expressed frustration at their inability to locate drug-free workers who would stay more than six weeks before leaving their new jobs. This was identified as a difficult challenge due both to the low local unemployment rate ("It's a job seeker's market") and a perceived bias in the educational system that discourages students from seeking employment in the manufacturing sector. Employers at this meeting expressed strong interest in having a designated "account representative" that they could call with job orders, in the hopes that this might increase the proportion of appropriate job applicants referred.

Although they were not represented at the employer meeting, employers participating in the second tier of employer services are reported to be pleased with the more intensive services they are receiving on a fee-for-service basis from DES or through funding streams administered by the Economic Development Group at the community college.

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN

The federal One-Stop Implementation Grant was a clear catalyst in getting state and local One-Stop planners to move from an approach involving *co-location* and *coordination* to *integration of services*. State goals established as part of the One-Stop planning process included a "fast track" schedule for the creation of a One-Stop center in each SDA by the end of 1996, despite the fact that not all SDAs appear to have fully bought into an integrated services approach.

The state has been highly influential in its clear policy support for the development of integrated local One-Stop centers, but has not prescribed what local One-stop centers should look like, preferring to encourage local partners to develop one-stop systems that are responsive to their particular local needs and priorities. Instead, the state has devoted much of its staff time and energy to the development of an integrated MIS and accountability system as well as the technological infrastructure to support self-service products. Key one-stop players at the state level are looking for local One-Stop partnerships to provide guidance about how actual service design and delivery should be transformed as a result of the new emphasis on customer-responsive services.

At the local level, concerns among current workforce development agency staff about their organizational future and individual job security are impeding planning for the transformation of workforce development services. Until the "dust settles" around the issues of selecting local service providers, it will be difficult for the participating partners to concentrate on improving customer services.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Des Moines Workforce Development Center has made extremely rapid progress from a model of co-location and coordinated referral among workforce development partners toward a model of integration of selected services. The strengths of the local One-Stop system include good communication and coordination among the key staff of participating partner agencies, a greatly improved understanding of what each local partner contributes to the system, and an emerging planning framework that considers how shared and integrated services can be used to address customer needs. A clear understanding of how to enrich employer services, in particular, appear to be emerging from the local partnership.

To further develop the One-Stop vision, local actors might do well do pay more attention to the services that would be valued by more highly educated and skilled job seekers. Rather than envisioning how workforce development services might be enriched and revitalized for individual job seeker customers, Center staff appear to be emphasizing the staff-intensive delivery of job development services characteristic of ES services in the recent past (e.g. managing job orders for local employers), rather than considering how group-based or self-service modes of service could be used to expand the availability and richness of career planning and job search assistance provided to an expanded customer base.

APPENDIX J

STATE OF MARYLAND

One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During March 1996

STATE OF MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 7/3/96

STATE OF MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The state of Maryland has come into the One-Stop demonstration with a history of interagency cooperation and the joint administration and operation of specific programs and initiatives. These collaborative efforts will facilitate the implementation of the state's One-Stop service delivery system, which is called *CareerNet*. Statewide efforts during the first year of the USDOL implementation grant have focused primarily on developmental and planning activities to support a clearly articulated and ambitious statewide One-Stop vision, which is enumerated as follows:

All One-Stop Career Centers will be part of a state and local community system providing quality service to both employers and citizens through the enhanced use of existing technology.

The vision incorporates what key players believe to be a fundamental paradigm shift that includes the following dynamics:

- from individuals preparing for a career, to individuals preparing for lifelong learning;
- from specific programs for targeted groups, to an array of services, many of which are available to anyone;
- from public workforce development targeted to disadvantaged populations, to One-Stop Centers that are viewed as similar to public libraries, with no stigma attached, an emphasis on self-service, and personal assistance based upon need.

Technology is perceived as an "enabler," supporting a clear business vision of a One-Stop service delivery system predicated upon the provision of high-quality information and services to a universal customer base. Within this clearly-defined schema, local areas have the flexibility to design and deliver services that meet local needs and demands. State respondents viewed *CareerNet* as part of an integrated service system, an initiative that can support, and be supported by, other critical initiatives, including School-to-Work, ES Revitalization, and welfare reform.

There are several contextual variables that have influenced, and continue to influence, One-Stop planning, design, implementation, and progress in the state of Maryland. The primary federal-level influence is clearly the national One-Stop vision, with its four broad outcome objectives to which the state has responded with a clear and distinct statewide One-Stop vision and design.

At the state level, there are two primary contextual variables that exert particularly strong influences on One-Stop implementation and progress: 1) a dynamic political and organizational environment; and 2) a vision with a strong technological component. Each is briefly described below.

- *There are significant changes taking place at the state level, so that Maryland's One-Stop system is moving forward amidst a dynamic political and organizational environment.* For example, within the Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation (DoLLaR), a key state-level agency, JTPA and ES are expected to merge by the beginning of the program year in order to increase effectiveness as part of the state's organizational restructuring process. Additionally, the state Department of Human Resources (DHR) is expected to assume complete administrative and operational control of the JOBS program as of 10/1/96 after jointly administering the program with DoLLaR since the program's inception. Therefore, the JTPA program will no longer be the presumptive deliverer of many services for customers of the JOBS program. State-level respondents believe this change to be related to impending welfare reform, although it is still being designed and debated in the state legislature. These and other instances of a changing organizational and political landscape have caused uncertainty among key One-Stop players as to how agency policies, roles, and staff functions will be influenced.
- *The fact that Maryland's One-Stop system has a clear technological backbone developed at the state level will enable CareerNet to offer a consistent and well-developed menu of services throughout the state, yet presents a host of additional design and implementation issues.* For example, keeping hardware and software development and installation on schedule and within the constraints of procurement rules and regulations has been a significant challenge. This has impacted the state's ability to be responsive to both state and local needs and timeframes. Moreover, although the technological infrastructure for *CareerNet* is still being developed and refined, the state is nevertheless pushing forward with statewide implementation of its One-Stop vision.

Maryland's One-Stop system continues to face rapid change from numerous directions. As characterized by one high-level state respondent, a major challenge of

One-Stop implementation is having "several balls in the air at the same time." At the time of the One-Stop site visit, many local sites were preparing to come on-line. The nine sites that were operational had been so for less than five months.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

There are two prominent state-level entities with respect to One-Stop governance in the state of Maryland. The *Governor's Workforce Investment Board* (GWIB) was established by state law in 1993 as the state's Human Resource Investment Council, replacing the former council mandated by JTPA. This entity holds a primary place in One-Stop governance as "the original convener" of the work to develop the statewide One-Stop concept, as the chief architect of the state's original One-Stop proposal, and as the One-Stop grant recipient. The *Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation* (DoLLaR) is another key player, acting as fiscal manager for the One-Stop grant. DoLLaR is also the entity responsible for the Job Service, UI, JTPA, Veterans' programs, the state's apprenticeship program, TAA and, currently in partnership with the state Department of Human Resources, the JOBS program (called "Project Independence").

Both entities in partnership are responsible for the planning, development, and implementation of One-Stop Centers, although their respective roles are shifting in response to One-Stop progress. GWIB's role, for instance, was more intensive at the outset of the grant, during the planning and development phase. With the state having recently entered its operational phase, the primary responsibility for One-Stop implementation has shifted to DoLLaR and, more specifically, to its Division of Employment & Training (DET).

The *local community college system* is another key partner entity in the statewide initiative. The community college system, which is governed by local boards, has historically been involved in workforce development as the primary vendor of training services throughout the state.

Additional agencies are involved in the statewide One-Stop initiative to the extent that they are represented on the GWIB, have authority over initiatives that support or complement the emerging workforce development system, and to the extent that these agencies are represented on the *CareerNet Steering Committee*. This is a broad-based

One-Stop policy committee drawing representation from state and local agencies and organizations, including community-based organizations and major employers. It was established at the start of the One-Stop grant and is the primary vehicle through which stakeholders have the opportunity to influence and impact One-Stop implementation and progress. Aside from the three primary players, state partner agencies represented on the *CareerNet* Steering Committee are:

- *Department of Human Resources* (DHR), which has primary responsibility for the JOBS program.
- *Maryland State Department of Education* (MSDE), which has authority over K-12 education and is responsible for administration of Maryland's School-to-Work initiative (called "Career Connections"), as well as the state-funded "Maryland's Tomorrow," a dropout prevention program. MSDE also contains a division related to adult career and technology programs.
- *The Division of Rehabilitation Service* (DORS), which is a separate division of the MSDE.
- *Maryland Higher Education Commission* (MHEC), which coordinates reporting and other activities across autonomous community college districts.
- *The Department of Business & Economic Development* (DBED), a recently formed state-level entity that provides training and other services to new and expanding businesses.

These agencies are generally considered "coordinating partners," functioning more in advisory rather than operational roles at present. The involvement of these partners is expected to increase, however, as the state moves forward with other features and priorities of the *CareerNet* system. Respondents from both GWIB and DoLLaR stressed that the state's first-year focus had been on developing a technological infrastructure and bringing local *CareerNet* Centers on-line in order to respond to individual job-seeker interests. Second-year priorities, including employer services, remote access and the establishment of Career Information Centers (described later) are believed to have more of an impact on coordinating partners' roles and customers.

Although respondents from coordinating agencies were generally pleased with their level of involvement and believed the One-Stop system to represent a "win-win" scenario for the state as well as for their respective agencies, some reservations were expressed. Particularly in the case of targeted populations, some respondents expressed concern over a system that places self-service options at a premium. Ultimately, however, respondents believed that technology was crucial as a means of universal access. As these entities become more directly involved in One-Stop design and implementation, it is reasonable to expect that they will be negotiating appropriate roles within the overall One-Stop system to the benefit of their agencies and customers.

State Framework for Local Governance

The framework for local governance consists of a *Planning & Management Team*, which represents both the planning group and the local management team that provides accountability and policy guidance for all One-Stop centers in the community. This local team is convened by the Chairperson of the Private Industry Council and consists of a core of "critical stakeholders" as follows:

- PIC Chair or representative;
- Job Service Manager;
- SDA Director;
- Local community college representative; and
- One additional employer.

State One-Stop actors believed this framework to be the least contentious, building upon existing administrative structures, as opposed to creating an entirely new governance arrangement. Each of Maryland's 12 SDAs were given $21,000 planning grants in May 1995 to establish these local teams and to begin a One-Stop dialogue process among partners. Membership on these local teams is reflective of the mandatory "core partners," which are believed to provide the preponderance of workforce development services and represent key funding streams: the Job Service (which is co-located with UI throughout the state), JTPA, and the local community college. (Although JOBS represents a key funding stream, the program has historically been jointly administered by DHR and DoLLaR; thus, JTPA has, in effect, been linked with this funding stream.) These three entities represent candidate "host sites" for local One-Stop Centers. In addition, management and administration of the One-Stop/*CareerNet* investment and equipment at each local site is the responsibility of the respective host agency, which is required to sign an agreement with the state. Notwithstanding these formal requirements, local teams can expand their membership to include other entities and are encouraged to do so (e.g., local education agencies, local providers, local DSS offices).

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

The primary formal means through which agencies communicate and coordinate is the *CareerNet* Steering Committee and various workgroups related thereto. Although the Steering Committee meets on a monthly basis, workgroups pertaining to specific issues and priorities draw representation or nominations from the committee and meet on a more frequent basis. During the first year of the implementation grant, five workgroups were charged with guiding the specification of the core features and services to be offered at One-Stop/*CareerNet* Centers. These included Job Entry Assistance, Participant Record System, Career Exploration Assistance, Customer Development, and Employer Access. During this second year, four new workgroups and one continuing workgroup are also planned (i.e., Employer Access, Consumer Reports, Performance Management, Integrated Intake/Case Management, Remote Job Seeker Access/Career Information Centers). In addition to these formal mechanisms, partner agencies also communicate on a frequent and informal basis, primarily through a key staffmember of the GWIB, who has an "open door" to all of the partner entities and whose role as general facilitator and One-Stop liaison was highly lauded by various respondents.

Communication and coordination mechanisms between state and local One-Stop staff are evolving as the state continues through the operational phase of *CareerNet*. Early in the implementation period, "*CareerNet* Newsletters" were transmitted on a monthly basis by DoLLaR to ensure consistent communication of information and guidance as implementation progressed. These newsletters were more accurately described as policy issuances that focused on One-Stop/*CareerNet* implementation in the initial local sites. When the first nine sites became operational shortly before the end of the first year of the grant period, the series was discontinued. Subsequently, there was a gap in formal One-Stop communication mechanisms. Respondents regretted this lapse, which was attributed to other pressing priorities. However, plans have been made for new approaches to maintain open lines of communication between state and local One-Stop actors, including the establishment of "Local Liaisons" and monthly meetings, each described below.

A new job classification is being created within DoLLaR for "Local Liaisons," who will interface with local One-Stop staff as facilitators and consultants responsible for general "workforce development." Each will be responsible for specific territories and will not focus on compliance monitoring, which is a function carried out separately and by different staff. At the time of the site visit, the state's training institute had begun providing training for Local Liaisons, augmenting the training that had taken place within DoLLaR.

Additional plans include monthly meetings with key DoLLaR staff, including the *CareerNet* Operations Director, managers of local sites that are operational, and "Resource Area Specialists." (The latter is a new job title established as a direct result of One-Stop/*CareerNet* implementation. These individuals, who can be employed by either of the three mandatory core partners, are responsible for assisting customers in utilizing the technology and other resources at local sites). One meeting had already been held at the time of the site visit, at which it was decided that Resource Area Specialists around the state needed to meet on a frequent and ongoing basis, especially during early implementation efforts in order to share experiences and ideas.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The state has used One-Stop implementation funding to move forward in the realization of its vision of a statewide system supported by a state-of-the-art technological underpinning. A 1994 ES Revitalization grant of $500,000 was the catalyst for what would evolve into One-Stop/*CareerNet* efforts. The first-year One-Stop implementation grant of nearly $3.5M, a separate LMI grant of approximately $1.1M, and a second year implementation grant of over $3.5M are significantly expanding upon efforts to provide customer-responsive information and services that were originally conceptualized through the ES Revitalization initiative.

Consistent with the state's plan, the major investment of the first year's grant was in *CareerNet* infrastructure. Implementation funds were principally used for the direct costs of equipment and software. Specifically, out of nearly $3.5M in first-year funding, almost $1.4M was spent on hardware, and more than $1M was spent on technical support. Other funded activities and products include software, local support, training, and personnel. State-level respondents believed that the high rate of expenditure during the first year of the grant period, which exceeded 80% exclusive of LMI dollars, positively influenced second-year funding, resulting in a larger second-year grant. Second-year monies will focus on the purchase of equipment for additional local sites, funding for Internet and other remote access features, contractors for network management, and the purchase of a "mid-level server" to significantly enhance the capability and responsiveness of the system to state and local agency needs.

In terms of local One-Stop implementation funding, there is no regular form of allocation to local areas. Notwithstanding one-time early planning grants, each local area receives *CareerNet* hardware and software. Local respondents at the Columbia site raised some questions regarding the prudence of this approach, considering the need for local sites to address the "intangibles" involved with organizational change, such as the necessity of building partnerships and rapport with current and prospective local partner entities.

Although state-level One-Stop partners place a high premium on coordination among partners and initiatives, efforts to implement a One-Stop system have been undertaken within distinct and individual program funding streams and requirements. "Blending systems" is perceived as complicated and prohibitive in the current multi-program environment. Because of this strongly-held view (in addition to the recently operational status of the One-Stop/*CareerNet* system), state-level partners have not negotiated cost-sharing or similar financial agreements. However, respondents from various state-level partner entities believed that cost-sharing agreements were a viable option worthy of exploration in order to sustain the ongoing development and progress of Maryland's One-Stop system, particularly when the grant period ends.

The prospective block-granting of federal workforce development programs is generally perceived by state-level actors as providing greater opportunities for achieving integrated systems by allowing more flexibility. However, respondents were uncertain as to how much flexibility block-granted programs could realistically offer. In addition, concern was expressed by both state and local respondents that the advantages of block grants might be thwarted by an accompanying reduction in overall funding levels. Indeed, although it was too early to discuss the cost savings generated by One-Stop implementation, respondents believed that one way to ascertain cost savings was the extent to which agencies could serve the same number of customers with shrinking dollars.

DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of State Design

Maryland's One-Stop initiative was originally predicated in the early 1990's upon the need to reengineer the delivery of workforce development services to improve customer service and responsiveness. Although several examples were cited of efforts and initiatives to increase collaboration and coordination toward this end, efforts were pushed to a new level in 1993 with an integrated planning process. This was the first organized attempt to coordinate activities in the absence of a new or specific funding stream as facilitator. State-level entities began a process of engaging in a consultative dialogue that would further the statewide goal of a coordinated system of service delivery to better meet the needs of the Maryland's citizenry. The award of a USDOL "ES Revitalization" grant to reengineer Job Service operations facilitated the state's movement toward its emerging vision.

Thus, Maryland was working on the concept of coordinated and integrated customer service delivery for almost a year before the One-Stop grant proposal was written. The grant was an opportunity to move forward with what was becoming a statewide vision for integrated service delivery with a focus on customer responsiveness. What began as an ES Revitalization effort has been expanded. Consequently, ES Revitalization and One-Stop are very much intertwined.

The desire to provide universal access to customer-responsive information and services with three years of dedicated funding and otherwise falling resource sets, led key One-Stop players to focus on technology as a means to realize an industrious statewide vision. However, technology is but a means to an end. State-level respondents caution observers that "technology" is not *CareerNet*. More properly, *CareerNet* is reflective of defining and using staff differently. The One-Stop effort in Maryland is perceived most importantly as a structural and organizational means to the end of improved information and services for increasing numbers of individual and employer customers.

The elements of the state's conceptual framework for the One-Stop/*CareerNet* system include:

- A network of over 50 One-Stop *CareerNet* Centers across the state that provide a minimum core menu of services, delivered chiefly through automation and self-service technologies.
- A network of "Career Information Centers" that house *CareerNet* hardware and software. These centers may be located in libraries, high schools, local DORS or DSS offices, or other community organizations not representing a core partner entity. (Development of this component is a priority for the second year of the grant.)
- An "LMI Bank" for individual and employer customers that provides remote access to high-quality labor market and career information. (Development of this component is a priority for the second year of the grant.)

The *inverted pyramid* approach to service delivery is a key part of the state's conceptual framework. The majority of customers will access information and services through the self-directed use of computer technology. A smaller percentage of customers will receive information and services from Center staff in groups, and, for those customers in need of more intensive services, individualized services will be available.

The primary component of the state's conceptual framework is the One-Stop *CareerNet* Center, which can be "hosted" by either of the three core partners, or some combination thereof. It is envisioned that each local site will have identical core services and technology, resource areas that include standardized materials, and at least one Resource Area Specialist to assist customers, so that Maryland's One-Stop system was characterized by one state-level respondent as "unitarian" at its essence. Beyond this, local areas have the latitude of adding services, components and compatible technologies. Indeed, according to the state's conceptual framework, core services are but one *level* of service. "Enhanced Services" represents another level of service that is expected to vary across local areas beyond the satisfaction of minimum requirements (e.g., computer literacy packages and standard software tutorials). For instance, local sites are encouraged to develop and provide on-site workshops in response to local needs.

Local areas have the option of achieving a local vision that incorporates these key features by employing one of three approaches, perceived as successive phases from system coordination to consolidation. The *No-Wrong Door Approach* includes detailed "articulation agreements" signifying referral and service procedures among key service providers in a community. The *Coordinated Multi-Service Center Approach* includes detailed agreements as well as co-located services. The *Integrated Service Approach*, which is the most comprehensive and challenging approach in the current multi-program environment, includes co-located services and partners, "one chain of command" and fully integrated case management.

State respondents believe that the process of developing a core service package is ongoing and evolving. As new technologies and applications are incorporated, the core service package is expected to be expanded so that the transformation to a One-Stop service delivery system is never "done."

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

The achievement of the federal goal of *Universality* is a clear and distinct objective of Maryland's One-Stop/*CareerNet* system. According to the state's vision, the core service package will be available to a universal customer base that includes both individuals and employers. In fact, one of the reasons for the system's emphasis on self-directed services is to enable the emerging One-Stop system to handle increased customer flow, particularly in an environment of shrinking dollars. Additionally, it is envisioned that the large network of One-Stop Centers will be perceived as a professional environment where customers can access high-quality information and services without stigma or eligibility for a particular program. A network of Career Information Centers, in addition to other forms of remote access, are also means to achieve this federal goal. According to the state's design, in order to achieve universality, individual customer empowerment is a key concept.

Despite clarity of vision, several challenges pertaining to universal access have emerged as key policy issues. For example, whether and to what extent the provision of universally available services drains resources and opportunity from targeted populations is a key issue according to various respondents. In addition, considering that direct access to at least the information portions of the *CareerNet* system have been promised to home users and organizations, there are challenges for these linkages if fee-for-service arrangements are explored at a later date. Furthermore, the public response to this transition from individual services to a more self-service/group service system is yet to be determined.

Customer Choice

Improving the customer focus of workforce development services was the principal catalyst for the statewide One-Stop system. The primary response to the federal objective of *Customer Choice* has been the development of self-service options under the leadership of key state-level One-Stop partners. In addition, *CareerNet* will provide multiple full-service One-Stop Centers across the state to assist jobseekers, students, and employers. A network of Career Information Centers, as well as remote access options are also part of the state's design framework. Moreover, local sites are encouraged to develop "enhanced" services that meet the needs and demands of the local labor market.

Although customer-directed access to services and individual empowerment are primary tenets of Maryland's One-Stop system, both state and local-level respondents agree that personal services provided by local staff are also necessary components of a responsive service delivery system. Actually, a basic premise behind the development of technology-driven, user-directed service options was freeing up staff time in order to provide more personal assistance for those customers with a need for more intensive services.

Integrated Services

According to the state vision, the federal objective of *Integrated Services* will be accomplished through a continuous process of minimizing duplication and incorporating additional services within local One-Stop Centers. Partners also believe that, to integrate services successfully, cross-training of staff will be necessary to ensure general knowledge of programs within the One-Stop service delivery system. At present, statewide One-Stop system integration in Maryland is based upon shared information and the coordination of activities and services among individual programs. Respondents from separate entities at both the state level and at the Columbia local site believed that, although integration was a viable goal, collaboration and coordination might be more realistic in the current multi-program environment that precludes the "mingling" of funds.

In order to respond to the challenges of implementing integrated intake and services with multiple partner entities, an interagency, state-local workgroup was in the process of being formed at the time of the site visit. Consistent with the state's original plan, "Integrated Services" will be a priority of the second year of the implementation period.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

State-level respondents are committed to the establishment of a system that is *Performance-Driven* and *Outcome-Based*. Because the One-Stop/*CareerNet* system had only recently become operational, however, efforts in this area are in their infancy. First-year priorities were more properly concentrated on bringing local sites on-line and developing core services for individuals. In general, state-level respondents believe One-Stop system performance measurement to be a conceptual challenge for states and local areas that have traditionally focused on performance measurement within distinct categorical programs—each with different priorities, requirements, reporting systems, and informational databases. Respondents expressed a desire to measure One-Stop *system* performance, as opposed to "pieces" within the system. Six broad goals have been developed based upon the perception of what a One-Stop system should accomplish. Local areas are also encouraged to incorporate these goals in local planning efforts.

- Increased Customer Utilization
- Increased Employer Utilization
- Increased Customer Satisfaction
- Increased Labor Market Penetration
- Increased Life-Long Learning
- Greater Agency Participation and Coordination

Although first-year priorities have been otherwise focused, performance measurement is a stated priority for the second year of the grant period, with plans for an interagency, state-local workgroup to concentrate on performance measurement issues. It is envisioned that the workgroup will review these goals/measures for continued feasibility, establish appropriate definitions (e.g., "life-long learning"), and explore potential data sources, reporting arrangements, the potential for local site management, and systematic ways to measure customer satisfaction.

Although One-Stop actors believe performance-driven activities and services to be crucial components of the emerging system, it is clear that One-Stop accountability has emerged as a major policy issue with which the state is struggling. Key questions include: To what extent and how will the transition of services to more self-service and group service approaches impede developing greater accountability? What will constitute accountability when an agency isn't directly in control of a transaction? What agency(ies) will be held accountable? Perhaps due to these big-picture issues and questions in a system that is evolving and unfolding, current recommendations are to maintain the six current general goals.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

The state of Maryland has placed a premium on capacity building initiatives to support statewide One-Stop implementation and continued progress. Primary responsibility for capacity building projects and related efforts resides with the state's training institute, the Maryland Institute for Employment & Training Professionals (MIETP). Thus, the state is utilizing an existing structure for capacity building to support One-Stop implementation. Although MIETP is the primary developer and deliverer of One-Stop/*CareerNet* capacity building, a collaborative approach is used that involves state and local officials in both training design and delivery. Four key training areas have been identified to support the state's One-Stop vision:

- *Orientation for Local Staff.* This is currently the predominant training area, as statewide efforts have focused on increasing the number of local sites that are operational. This training uses a train-the-trainer approach, so that local staff recommended by local teams are directly involved in delivering training at local sites. The curriculum includes several topic areas, including "managing change" and the state's "inverted pyramid" approach to service delivery in a One-Stop environment.
- *Resource Area Specialist Training.* This is also expected to be a primary focus during 1996, with opened sites receiving priority. This 16-day training is divided into three separate modules and includes general training on the role of the specialist (e.g., components on customer service, interpersonal communication, etc.), as well as training on different software programs. Once the training is refined based on local feedback, it is the state's intention to issue certificates so that individuals can be "certified" Resource Area Specialists.
- *Technical Training.* This less-structured component is currently being handled by the *CareerNet* technical team, which is under the direction of the *CareerNet* Technology Director employed by DoLLaR. As more local sites come on-line, it is likely that this training component will need to become more structured and defined.
- *Cross-Functional Training.* This training area is the least developed and is based on the assumption that the One-Stop system requires staff to be familiar with a range of local programs and systems. Particularly because the state does not mandate co-located programs and services, this area is perceived as especially challenging. Promising ideas include "job shadowing" arrangements among partner entities and user-friendly "primer" manuals on agency programs.

In addition to these formally specified training areas, MIETP also provides a range of training on general topic areas (e.g., supervisory skills, marketing, counseling), as well as training for specific audiences (e.g., training for Local Liaisons on "Building Partnerships"). MIETP staff also play key roles as facilitators at state-level meetings, and there are designs to augment their role to include local-level facilitation as well. For instance, there are plans to engage all Resource Area Specialists across the state in periodic focus groups with MIETP staff as facilitators to moderate discussions and ascertain areas of potential future training.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

The provision of customer-oriented labor market information (LMI) and related services is at the core of Maryland's One-Stop/*CareerNet* system. This goal is supported by an information technology (IT) framework that is expansive, ambitious and in a constant state of development. DoLLaR has a primary role with respect to LMI/IT development, but the agency works in close partnership with the Maryland Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (MOICC) to build upon agency strengths and minimize duplication.

Respondents believed the statewide One-Stop system to be wholly consistent with the vision promoted by ALMIS (America's Labor Market Information System). The one-time LMI infusion of $1.1M, in addition to general One-Stop implementation funding, are financing structures, projects, and initiatives intended to support the development of a statewide system.

The *CareerNet* computer system contains a variety of features and programs to inform decision-making and empower individuals. As mentioned earlier, the state's One-Stop design and conceptual framework includes different "levels" of service. The "Core Service Level" consists of four "clusters" of minimum core services for individuals and one "cluster" of core services for employers, each to be delivered predominantly through self-directed computer access. Clusters pertaining to individual services are:

- *Automated Personal Access Cluster.* The intent is to create a single automated record for each customer that all participating agencies can use. The state made limited progress, however, with this feature during first year One-Stop implementation. A workgroup will focus on this aspect of individual services during the second year of the grant.
- *Job Finding Cluster.* This multi-level service is designed to enable individuals to look for and secure a job. It includes ALEX (described below), on-line Job Search Assistance, and other labor exchange services (each of which can be augmented with local workshops, for instance). Plans for this cluster include a self-registration talent bank to market individuals to employers by skills/interests and interactive resume preparation.
- *Career Exploration Cluster.* This includes information on careers, demands and qualifications, occupations suited to individual skills, interests, abilities, etc. There is an automated self-assessment component and a computerized skill inventory feature. It is intended

that individual customers can map out appropriate career, employment, and learning plans with the appropriate level of staff assistance. Also included within this cluster is *CareerNet Visions*, the state's Career Information Delivery System (described below).

- *Customer Development Cluster.* This core service enables individuals to obtain information on education and training opportunities in the state and locality, as well as financial and other support. Information on certain eligibility requirements, costs, and graduate earnings is also included.

Two specific LMI/IT products that support Maryland's One-Stop vision are *ALEX* and *CareerNet Visions*. ALEX (and an employer version called *XELA*) are the state's automated labor exchange systems, described as the "core of the Job Service self-service capability." Both ALEX and XELA were functional prior to the receipt of the One-Stop implementation grant, having been developed by a multistate consortium that was chaired by Maryland and funded through an ES Automation Grant. ALEX is for individuals; XELA (the reverse of "ALEX") is for employers and is contained within the employer "cluster." With ALEX, individuals can search on-line for job information in a user-friendly, PC-based format; with XELA, employers can look through suppressed applicant files, contacting the Job Service to request referrals.

Maryland's Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) is called *CareerNet Visions*, which was developed by a contractor with funds from the state's LMI grant. In actuality, there are three versions geared for particular audiences, so that the state's CIDS is "developmentally-based." "*Visions*" is the middle school version. "*Visions+*" is for high school/college programs. "*CareerNet Visions,*" which is part of the *CareerNet* software, is specifically for adults. It is a self-service career exploration and information system that is user-friendly and enjoyable, with both touch-screen and print capability. All three versions are linked; a conceptual framework has already been formulated for an elementary school version. For local One-Stop sites that are operational, computer workstations offer the *CareerNet Visions* software. For Job Service offices (one of the possible host sites) that are not yet fully recognized "One-Stop *CareerNet* Centers," *Visions+* is the system that is available. Although individual customers and local respondents at the Columbia site were enthusiastic about and supportive of the system and its present capabilities, there was also some frustration expressed regarding downtime and slowness of the system. However, there is clear recognition at both the state and local levels that this software is part of a huge system that is still being developed, refined, and enhanced.

In addition to these specific features of the state's LMI/IT framework, nine additional projects are presently financed by the LMI grant. One project, for instance, pertains to research on employer behavior and current employment dynamics; another pertains to occupational wages and is examining methods to disaggregate wage data to be more geographically specific; still another pertains to specified enhancements to the *CareerNet Visions* system. These and other projects are at different stages of development and extend throughout the implementation period. Projects have clear and distinct goals, timeframes, and are intended to support the statewide vision of making information more accurate, usable, understandable and meaningful for both individual and employer customers.

Marketing

State-level One-Stop actors clearly view marketing as crucial to the success of One-Stop/*CareerNet* implementation. However, the development of a formal statewide One-Stop marketing strategy has been delayed. Notwithstanding some notable activities and specific products, such as a *CareerNet* logo, One-Stop marketing during the first year of the implementation grant did not receive top priority, as the state concentrated on other more pressing concerns, such as increasing the number of local One-Stop sites.

State respondents expressed caution and concern with respect to "selling" a system that is not yet ready and that still requires improvements to basic system features. (Most of the initial systems throughout the state were not installed until October/November 1995.) Marketing a system perceived as performing less than optimally is believed to be costly, ineffective, and, generally, problematic. If customers are "driven away," it will be more difficult to "get them back." Furthermore, it was the perception of state-level respondents that there is some anxiety on the part of local area staff with respect to broadly marketing a system to which local areas are still adjusting.

Formal marketing efforts to date have, for the most part, pertained to the establishment of a statewide One-Stop "identity." For instance, a statewide *CareerNet* logo has been developed. There is also state-sanctioned (plexiglass) signage that includes the logo at each of the nine current One-Stop/*CareerNet* sites, in addition to small, adhesive-type labels that could be posted in storefront windows (such as the small "AMEX" or "VISA" labels used by restaurants). The latter would identify a site (either a full-fledged One-Stop/*CareerNet* Center or a Career Information Center) as one that contained access to the *CareerNet* hardware and software. It is envisioned that Maryland's citizens will come to know *CareerNet* and its service locations partly through the use of these identifiers.

Related to the issue of identity, the "naming" of local sites was an area still in various stages of conceptualization. At present, operational sites can retain current names, but also have the *CareerNet* logo featured prominently. However, this policy was not fully satisfying to respondents at the Columbia local site. In addition to struggling with a viable name for their Center, both local respondents and individual customers believed the absence of a name to be unsettling.

State respondents caution that the One-Stop effort in Maryland is in a state of evolution. Any formal or informal marketing that takes place is in the context of a "work in progress." It is anticipated that a formal marketing strategy will be defined later on in the implementation period, probably by the end of the second year of the grant period when additional local sites have come on-line. State One-Stop actors expressed a desire to develop marketing materials that allow local flexibility within state parameters, recognized the need for different marketing strategies for different customer groups, and discussed tentative plans for the establishment of a marketing workgroup. However, designs are clearly in their infancy. Perhaps for this reason, and because the state recognizes that many local sites are already operational, local areas have been encouraged to proceed with marketing efforts that meet local needs and demands.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

The state of Maryland is striving to move forward to create and implement its vision of a One-Stop service delivery system. Statewide implementation is a "phased-in" approach, using a process begun with the receipt of nominations from local sites for either first, second, or third year implementation. Nominees are then evaluated against a series of site-specific criteria (e.g., site readiness, budget capacity, quality of the local plan), in addition to consistency with the broader state picture (e.g., ensuring distribution of sites across the state.) State respondents expressed a need to ensure that, by the end of the second year of the grant period (i.e., 11/96), every jurisdiction within the state is "covered" to some extent.

At the time of the One-Stop site visit, *CareerNet* equipment was installed and available in nine sites within six jurisdictions, well ahead of the three sites planned for implementation prior to the end of the first year of the grant period. By the end of the second year, another 22 sites are expected to go on-line, for a total of 31. Nominations have already been received for close to 90 local sites, making the attainment of the state's goal of a network of over 50 sites appear likely. However, due to the high costs of equipment and system installation, in addition to the likelihood of decreased third-year One-Stop funding, the state may have to scale back implementation plans. Although the total number of expected One-Stop/*CareerNet* Centers would remain unchanged, smaller host sites previously planned for full One-Stop/*CareerNet* implementation may instead evolve into Career Information Centers because it is more cost-effective for system installation in larger sites.

Advancement is taking place in other areas as well, including capacity building and the evolving LMI/IT framework, although state-level respondents would prefer speedier One-Stop progress. However, it is logical to expect slower-than-anticipated progress with complex system-level changes, especially those involving the development and installation of a statewide technological system. Early progress was deferred to some extent until a Technology Director was hired to guide system development. The procurement of necessary staff did not occur until several months into the implementation period, slowing initial progress. Subsequently, in order to be responsive to the expectations of both USDOL and local areas, state-level One-Stop actors "knit together" existing products and added new features in order to roll out a system. Beta-testing is a continual process, as is the development of new and improved system capabilities. Therefore, although the state is "laying track while the train is coming," it is nevertheless moving forward, albeit in a less polished form than respondents would prefer.

INFLUENCES ON STATE DESIGN

In addition to the primary contextual factors mentioned earlier in this profile, other factors have also influenced One-Stop design, progress, and implementation in the state of Maryland. Increasingly flat budgets, with a real possibility of further budget cuts, has, in part, been precipitous in the conceptualization of a highly ambitious statewide One-Stop vision and design that, for instance, utilizes technology as an enabler. The clear desire to do more with less is omnipresent. This has resulted in a clearly-delineated statewide vision that has informed and impacted One-Stop design.

Another key influence is the ES Revitalization initiative, which has clearly been instrumental in the development of the state's One-Stop design. Finally, consistency with what is believed to be a predominant and necessary feature of private sector corporate culture is an additional influence: there is an emphasis on empowering individuals to take responsibility for their own development and careers.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

To summarize, Maryland's approach to One-Stop design and implementation is characterized by numerous features, such as: (1) strong state leadership and direction to guide the development of local One-Stop systems within clearly-delineated state parameters supported by a clear business vision, with latitude for local variants regarding organization, approach, and enhanced One-Stop services; (2) a state-developed system that utilizes a technological backbone to provide standardized core services, facilitating universal access and increased customer choice, while being responsive to declining resources; (3) a statewide local-level organizational structure that builds upon existing workforce development systems and structures; (4) a vision that incorporates an "inverted pyramid" service delivery paradigm, offering Maryland's residents tiered services ranging from self-service access to high-quality information and resources, to group services, to more intensive and individualized services; (5) a One-Stop approach that currently offers localities the option of different degrees of coordination among distinct programs and funding streams, from "no-wrong-door," to "co-location," to a more fully integrated approach; (6) planned strong coordination among workforce development initiatives, including ES Revitalization, Welfare-to-Work and School-to-Work; and (7) a strong interest in building support within the employer community.

As stated throughout this Profile, Maryland's approach to the design and implementation of a statewide One-Stop system is bold and enterprising. Although Maryland has only recently entered the operational phase of One-Stop implementation, considering the industrious design and enormity of the cultural change that is envisioned, it is not surprising that challenges have been encountered, and more can be expected. For example, as coordinating partner agencies become increasingly involved in One-Stop implementation and progress, it is likely that the One-Stop context may face additional challenges as partners negotiate roles, responsibilities and otherwise further enter the fray, particularly those agencies that have traditionally served hard-to-serve populations. Moreover, the dynamic nature of the political and organizational environment further complicates the implementation context. Clarity of purpose, strong state leadership, and the continued support of varied stakeholders will likely be strong facilitators.

APPENDIX K

EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During June 1996

EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

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EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Eastside Career Center is a "full-service" career center that is part of an extended network being developed to serve employers and job seekers throughout the Baltimore City service delivery area (SDA). The City of Baltimore—with 700,000 residents, 59% of whom are African-American—is surrounded by six suburban counties that are also part of the Baltimore primary metropolitan statistical area. Partly as the result of the out-migration of residents and city-based businesses to the surrounding suburban counties over the last 15 years, central city residents have significantly lower education levels, lower median incomes, higher unemployment rates, and higher poverty rates than residents in the surrounding urban counties. For example, the unemployment rate among Baltimore city residents was 8.7% in 1994, compared to 5.6% in surrounding Baltimore County. However, with 390,000 jobs within the city limits, the city is still a net importer of workers, many of whom come from nearby Baltimore County.

One of the themes of the local One-Stop initiative—as well as of the *Employ Baltimore* campaign with which One-Stop efforts are closely coordinated—is to close the education, employment, and earnings gaps between Baltimoreans and other metropolitan area residents by helping city residents compete successfully for local jobs. In addition, job creation strategies are being pursued by local elected officials and economic development planners. Recent efforts to stimulate downtown economic development have resulted in the development of a new downtown hotel and convention center. Efforts to stimulate economic growth have also been fortified by federal Empowerment Zone funding earmarked for business retention/job creation in targeted low-income neighborhoods.

The stated mission of the Baltimore Career Center Network is "to provide effective employment and training services to the entire Baltimore community through comprehensive integration and coordination of services among sites and funding sources, a customer service approach, and state-of-the-art technology." The network combines co-location of staff with the implementation of integrated staff functions and delivery of an integrated menu of services in full-service centers with a "no wrong door" approach that links participating service providers throughout the city. When fully developed, the system will include:

- Three *full-service career centers* offering a comprehensive menu of staffed and self-service options, open to the general public as well as individuals qualifying for targeted services.
- A number of *specialized centers* offering a more limited set of services. Examples of specialized centers include free-standing Job Service offices with limited ES/UI services, centers specializing in youth services, and centers specializing in services to welfare-dependent families.
- A network of satellite "*village centers*" staffed by community-based organizations that will conduct outreach to residents of targeted low-income neighborhoods, provide counseling on education and employment, and refer interested residents to services available in other network locations.

Local One-Stop partners began planning for the development of an integrated menu of employment and training services that would transcend agency and program boundaries nearly a year before the state of Maryland received its One-Stop Implementation Grant. Initial discussions of how to integrate services focused on the transformation of services to meet the needs of dislocated workers. Previous Job Service and JTPA service models were not varied enough to meet the diverse needs of the dislocated worker population. Coordinated efforts by local Job Service and JTPA partners to develop "customer-driven" services for dislocated workers as well as early intervention services for UI recipients under the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services Program were catalysts in the movement to reengineer and consolidate local workforce development services. Declining federal funding also made local partners realize that they needed to develop a coordinated service approach to achieve economies of scale in service delivery.

The design and implementation of the Eastside Center—as well as of the Baltimore One-Stop system as a whole—is being influenced by a number of local factors, including: (1) access to Maryland's well-developed technology-based CareerNet automated services; (2) strong interest in and support for workforce development and economic development issues by local elected officials and city administrators; (3) a commitment to involving community-based organizations in the design and delivery of One-Stop services; (4) the need to address the employment-related needs of 40,000 individuals currently on the AFDC caseload; and (5) an entrepreneurial approach to securing funding to further local economic development and workforce development objectives. These factors are discussed in more detail below:

- *Maryland's CareerNet hardware and software is a key element in the design and delivery of services within the Baltimore Career Center Network.* As a licensed recipient of the CareerNet system products, the partners in the local career center network have benefited from the extensive technology-based products already developed at the state level. The partners in local full-service centers, such as the Eastside Career Center, have been able to focus their design efforts on further development of self-service options, plus developing a diverse menu of enhanced services to supplement the self-service tier.

- *The mayoral administration and city agencies are strongly committed to workforce development services as a tool to improve the educational and employment status of city residents, particularly those residing in low-income and minority neighborhoods.* As a result of strong political and staff support for these issues, the One-Stop initiative in Baltimore has enjoyed high visibility, a strong emphasis on collaboration among local partners, and the coordination of multiple funding streams on behalf of a common vision.

- *Community-based organizations have historically played important roles in Baltimore in developing neighborhood-oriented improvement initiatives and providing services to local residents.* The local One-Stop planning process has recognized the important contribution of community-based organizations and included them as key partners in the Career Center Network. Community-based organizations have been designated as the contracted managers of two of the three full-service career centers in the city. In addition, the One-Stop centers will be closely affiliated with the network of six "village centers" that will be operated by neighborhood-based organizations as part of the Empowerment Zone initiative, described below.

- *Under welfare reform, the local partners will have to design a system for serving the 40,000 individuals currently on the AFDC caseload.* Since 1994, the local JTPA administrative entity has served welfare recipients at distinct "Project Independence" service centers. Although the Department of Social Services has indicated that it wants to be "inside the tent" in the CareerNet delivery system, it is likely that welfare-to-work services will continue to be provided through a distinct service network, because of the high customer volume and distinct service approach mandated for welfare recipients. (Although welfare recipients are eligible for JTPA services, the state's welfare reform initiative emphasizes job search assistance and work experience as the two primary services and discourages participation in long-term training.) However, to the extent possible, CareerNet services will be provided to welfare customers and the delivery of customer-centered services will be attempted.

- *The local One-Stop partners have secured funds from a number of different sources to support local economic development and workforce development objectives.* The One-Stop initiative is supported by and coordinated with these multiple initiatives, which include:
  - *Employ Baltimore,* a city-wide campaign to support the development of Baltimore businesses and encourage employers to hire Baltimore residents.
  - A federally-funded *Empowerment Zone (EZ)* initiative, underway in six U.S. cities including Baltimore since December of 1994, to create incentives for job retention and new job creation in high poverty areas. Baltimore's Empowerment Zone project has a total budget of $100 million to invest in six low-income neighborhoods over a 5-year period.
  - *Career Connections*, Baltimore's school-to-work initiative. The City of Baltimore received a local school-to-work grant (from DOL/DOE) in the amount of $482,000, which targets career preparation and skills/training for youth in West Baltimore.
  - *East Baltimore Youth Fair Chance*, a DOL-funded initiative with a total budget of $4.6 million to coordinate job training, educational, and community support services on behalf of young people age 14 to 30 in a targeted area in East Baltimore.
  - *Bridges to Work,* a foundation-funded initiative with a budget of $1.7 million to link job seekers in Baltimore City to jobs in suburban Maryland through the development of improved transportation linkages between the city and the suburbs.

The entrepreneurial efforts of the local One-Stop partners have also resulted in Baltimore's receipt of two additional federal grants related to One-Stop system development.[1] The Eastside Career Center has played a major role in fielding each of these initiatives and each has supported the further development of local services consistent with the One-Stop vision.

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[1] The Mayor's Office of Employment Development exemplifies the entrepreneurial spirit. The agency's 1996 budget of over $25 million was composed of 25 different funding streams, of which a number were discretionary grants.

- A *One-Stop Local Learning Laboratory* grant of $350,000 from the Department of Labor's One-Stop office has helped staff from the Eastside Center and the Urban League Center to expand the One-Stop services available to the general public as well as to disseminate information about the local One-Stop approach.
- Receipt of a $780,000 Title III national demonstration grant and an additional $318,000 state grant to test "*Career Management Accounts*" has enabled the Center to reengineer the training assistance available to targeted customers to make these services responsive to individual customers' needs and interests.

Each of the multiple initiatives and funding streams associated with the One-Stop initiative is viewed as supportive of the others. However, the result is a very crowded playing field, with a need for close coordination among different initiatives to ensure that duplication of effort is not occurring. The respondents at the Eastside Career Center described the relationships between the Baltimore Career Center Network, CareerNet, and Employ Baltimore as follows: " 'Employ Baltimore' is the trademark for advertising integrated job seeker/employer services. CareerNet is the technology used to provide the services. The Baltimore Career Center Network is the service delivery structure for the employer and job seeker services advertised as part of the initiative."

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Planning and Oversight. In the state of Maryland, local areas interested in becoming CareerNet implementation sites are required to form a local planning team and undergo a coordinated local planning process. Following the state blueprint, the chair of the local Private Industry Council designated the PIC's Business Services and Training Subcommittee as the local One-Stop planning team.[2] This committee had begun to deal with issues of integration of services across local workforce development agencies and service providers even prior to the development of a formal One-Stop grant application. As the official One-Stop planning team, the committee participated in and oversaw the development of the Baltimore City local plan requesting that Baltimore be designated as a first-round CareerNet participant.

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[2] The Business Services Subcommittee is one of four working committees of the Private Industry Council. The other three are: The Executive Committee (the PIC Chair and Chairs of the other three Subcommittees); the Youth and School-to-Work Subcommittee; and the Welfare Employment Policy Committee.

The 14 members of the local planning team include the PIC chair and three additional employer representatives, as well as high-level representatives from the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED)—which is the local administrative entity for the JTPA program, the Job Service division of the Maryland Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation, and the Baltimore City Community College. Additional members include representatives of two organizations that had previously played a key role in the delivery of JTPA services as contractors to MOED—The Baltimore Urban League and the AFL-CIO of Metropolitan Baltimore.[3] Thus, the planning body responsible for the Baltimore One-Stop system included the entities responsible for the major federal funding streams as well as the key local service provider partners. MOED also provided a strong link to the mayoral administration as well as to the multiple associated initiatives that are underway in the city.

On-Site Center Partners. The three full-service career centers will each have their own configuration of on-site partners. At the Eastside Career Center, the delivery of JTPA services is undertaken directly by MOED staff.[4] The Job Service has three staff on-site at the Eastside Center and will also have staff outstationed at each of the other two full-service centers. Although Baltimore City Community College is a formal member of the local One-Stop planning team and is active as a vendor of occupational training and a provider of customized training to meet local employer needs, the college does not outstation college staff at other network sites.[5]

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[3] Under the previous system, the Urban League had operated a center serving JTPA Title IIA and dislocated worker participants and the AFL-CIO had operated the local center for dislocated workers. Under the new One-Stop design, each of these contractors will be responsible for managing a full-service center that serves a universal customer population.

[4] At the other two full-service centers, MOED will subcontract with the Baltimore Urban League and AFL-CIO Baltimore Metropolitan Council for the delivery of JTPA-funded services.

[5] At the time of the site visit, the community college was planning to participate as a Career Information Center, which would enable them to have CareerNet system hardware and software installed at the community college without committing a full-time resource area specialist to assist customers in using the automated system.

At the time of the site visit, the on-site service partners at the Eastside Career Center included the following:

- *Mayor's Office of Employment Development* (MOED) accounts for the majority of the staff housed at the Eastside Career Center. At the Eastside Career Center, MOED staff support core services to all One-Stop customers and provide JTPA-funded services to economically disadvantaged adults and dislocated workers.
- *Maryland Job Service* staff have been assigned to the Center as part of an integrated staffing team since February 1996. At the time of the site visit, three Job Service employees were assigned full-time to the Center, including a Job Service supervisor/interviewer, an interviewer and a veterans employment services representative. Job Service staff also participate in the delivery of core services to One-Stop customers.
- A nurse assistant funded by the Baltimore City Health Department has office hours at the Center once a week to provide blood pressure screening and assist Center customers with problems such a weight reduction or referrals for medical problems.
- Until May 1996, MOED also contracted for an on-site staff person to represent the local United Way's "Call for Help" program, which provides food, clothing, emergency services to homeless individuals, mental health counseling, and other supportive services. However cutbacks in the MOED budget forced the agency to eliminate the funding for this on-site position just before the site visit.

Center Governance. Ongoing governance at the Eastside Career Center is provided through a team structure. Although formal lines of staff supervision still follow agency lines, center plans as well as day-to-day staff assignments are developed by teams in which staff from all on-site partners participate. Overall guidance on the career center system philosophy and direction is provided by the MOED General Manager, housed at the Eastside Career Center, whose job includes management and oversight of the entire career center network. Because the Eastside Center is the most advanced local One-Stop pilot, decisions regarding its design tend to be discussed at the network level as well as at the center level.

Oversight of day-to-day Center operations is shared by two MOED supervisors and the local Job Service supervisor. Additional members of the local management team include a Program Operations Specialist supported by the Local Learning Laboratory grant. The Center management team meets monthly, with bi-weekly meetings of subcommittees. At the time of the site visit, the active subcommittees included a group working on the plans for the local resource library and a group developing a protocol for coordinated job development activities across local partners.

Coordination with Additional Partners. As part of the Baltimore Career Center Network, the Eastside Center partners coordinate closely with additional agency partners not physically present at the Center, including welfare-to-work, school-to-work, and economic development partners.

MOED is currently a contractor to the Department of Social Services (DSS) for the delivery of welfare-to-work services at two separate "Project Independence" program centers. CareerNet hardware and software are also being installed in both Project Independence centers during the first phase of Baltimore's One-Stop implementation initiative. Although housed at different locations than the full-service centers, the specialized welfare-to-work centers will be part of a new electronic scheduling network that will facilitate individual customer referrals between all local service sites.

Youth-related initiatives in Baltimore, which include the JTPA-funded Summer Youth Employment Program, the Youth Fair Chance initiative in East Baltimore, and Baltimore's School-to-Work initiative—called Career Connections—are not directly represented by staff housed at the three full-service career centers. However, adult and youth initiatives are carefully coordinated at the agency level (e.g., within MOED, which oversees both youth and adult JTPA services), as well as through overlapping memberships on the local School-to-Work advisory board and the Private Industry Council. Integration of youth services with the One-Stop initiative—through the installation of CareerNet automated services at youth service sites and the encouragement of youth to use the full-service career centers—is currently a high priority for MOED managers. Furthermore, under the Employ Baltimore initiative, local partners are consolidating the marketing and delivery of services to employers on behalf of both adult and youth customers.

The One-Stop system is also designed to involve economic development partners in the design and delivery of services to local employers and to use job-seeker services to help promote local economic development efforts. State and local economic development partners currently meet on a monthly basis. Economic development objectives are at the heart of the Empowerment Zone initiative that is closely coordinated with the Baltimore Career Center Network. The Private Industry Council was recently expanded to include local economic development agency representatives.

In summary, the organization of the One-Stop initiative in the Baltimore service delivery area is characterized by: (1) full cooperation and active support of integrated services among co-located JTPA and Job Service partners; (2) full cooperation by the third required local partner—the local community college—in network planning but a more limited participation by this partner in the direct delivery of career center services; (3) the use of a team structure with cross-agency functional teams making decisions about local Center operations and services; (4) active coordination among One-Stop, welfare-to-work, school-to-work, and economic development initiatives despite lack of co-location of these partners.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Communication Within and Among Local Centers. Because the local partners are interested in having direct service delivery staff participate actively in teams to design One-Stop services and solve ongoing problems, supporting communication among Center staff is an important feature of the One-Stop design. Early in the planning for the Eastside Career Center, staff participated in several retreats that helped inform everyone about the philosophical underpinnings of the One-Stop system and involved them in discussions about the One-Stop design. MOED has also involved staff from its two subcontractors—Urban League and AFL-CIO, each of which will be operating additional full-service centers—in retreats and planning sessions on One-Stop service design.

At the Eastside Center, a variety of formal and informal communications tools are used to support the development of an integrated Center staff with a sense of common purpose. These include regular staff meetings and frequent informal communications among direct service staff. However, at the time of the site visits, it was not possible for staff within the Center to communicate with each other by electronic mail.

Communication among the local partners located throughout the Baltimore Career Center Network has also been identified as an important system-level need. To address this need, local partners are using most of the local One-Stop planning grant received from the state to develop an automated scheduling network linking different service sites. Staff at any networked site will be able to dial-in to the scheduling bulletin board at any other site, pull up the schedule for any of the group workshops, counseling sessions, or training sessions offered at the site, and schedule a customer for an available time slot. At the time of the site visit, this electronic system was being piloted between the Eastside Center and the main Job Service office downtown.

In addition, it is planned that the scheduling system will also support a "Question and Answer" communication system among sites, to allow staff from any center to communicate with designated system experts for particular funding streams.

Communication between the Local Site and the State. Perhaps because they are located in the state capital, local respondents indicated that they work closely with the members of the state One-Stop steering committee[6] and participate on many of the state One-Stop work groups that meet on a monthly basis. Local respondents view the state and the Baltimore site as sharing leadership roles in the development of the One-Stop model for the state. As one respondent stated, "We don't wait for the state to tell us what to do. The state wants local sites to show leadership. We are testing a model that supplements the state's automated CareerNet system with local resources to achieve a more comprehensive menu of One-Stop services."

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The Baltimore Career Center Network has been implemented primarily by coordinating existing funding streams. Only relatively small amounts of funding have been designated specifically for One-Stop system development. The most important of the contributions earmarked for One-Stop development include the receipt of CareerNet hardware and software from the state (paid for largely by Maryland's One-Stop Implementation Grant), the receipt of a small local One-Stop planning grant from the state, and the receipt of a Local Learning Laboratory grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Maryland retained most of its One-Stop Implementation Grant at the state level to develop and implement the hardware and software for the CareerNet system. Approval of Baltimore's local CareerNet plan by the state had resulted in the installation of 83 CareerNet workstations for customer use and 63 staff workstations across five local sites by the end of the second implementation year. During a planned third phase, the

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[6] Both the Director of MOED and MOED's General Manager of the One-Stop Career Center Network are on the state's One-Stop Steering Committee.

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state will install CareerNet hardware and software in an additional nine network sites (a combination of full-service, specialized service, and satellite centers).

Beyond receipt of the CareerNet hardware and software, local sites received only a small amount—$21,000—from the state to support the development of local One-Stop systems. The majority of the local $21,000 planning grant was allocated to the development of a communications system to support integrated customer scheduling and promote consultations among network partners on different areas of expertise, as described above. The local planning team also received an additional $10,000 from the city to support system-wide electronic communications.

In July 1995, the Eastside Career Center and the Baltimore Urban League Center were selected to share a $350,000 Local Learning Lab grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The award was made, in part, to show how a One-Stop functions when it has multiple connections to other initiatives and projects. Receipt of the learning lab grant provided another earmarked source of funds to develop an integrated One-Stop system. Activities covered with the learning lab grant have included the design and development of local resource libraries for each of the full-service centers in the network and the refinement of local learning laboratories through the acquisition of software to supplement the CareerNet software.

Beyond the funds earmarked for One-Stop development, the design and implementation of an integrated service package at the Eastside Center has depended on the co-location of staff and development of integrated staff functions by multiple agencies supported by multiple funding streams. Most of the ongoing costs of operating the Eastside Career Center, including the cost of rent and utilities, are being paid from funding streams administered by MOED. Programs offered by MOED staff housed at the Eastside Center include JTPA Title IIA services for economically disadvantaged adults and JTPA Title III services for dislocated workers. In addition, staff housed at the Eastside Center are managing a special demonstration grant from USDOL of $780,000 to test "career management accounts" as a way of providing retraining assistance to dislocated workers. Services provided by Job Service staff housed at the Center are supported by Wagner-Peyser and Veterans Employment Services funding.

Formal cost-sharing arrangements have not been developed among the participating partners. Rather, all Center staff share in providing the core One-Stop services to the general public, including Center Information Sessions, staff support for the CareerNet room, the resource library, the resource laboratory, and Job Club and resume writing workshops available to the general public. When provided by JTPA-funded staff, these services are considered outreach and pre-enrollment services associated with the JTPA program. Job Service staff are able to provide more intensive services to the general public using Wagner-Peyser funds.

At the time of the site visit, local respondents had not found the DOL cost allocation technical assistance guide to be as useful as they had hoped and had decided not to request a waiver to pilot the TAG. They indicated that federal workforce development block grants "would make [accounting for the costs of integrated services] a lot easier, as long as there is strong local control, so that block grants could be used to address local needs."

Center staff have also begun discussing fee-for-service arrangements as a way to offer more intensive services to a broader range of customers. Possible services for which fees could be charged include job search/job retention seminars and publications developed by the Center.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

In preparation for the transition to integrated services, the local partners underwent a structured planning process to design a new network, based on "what each of the partners could bring to the table." They agreed to "bring the JTPA and Job Service infrastructures together in some way" so that they could offer a standardized set of services in a variety of different locations around the city, without "taking over each other's jobs." This local vision went substantially beyond the state's minimum requirements for a One-Stop system that would use electronic linkages to coordinate referrals while permitting each partner to remain in its own location and retain its own identity. Although their vision diverged somewhat from the state's One-Stop vision, local respondents indicated that the state has been very supportive in helping them realize their vision.

Local players have planned a series of distinct changes in the transition from the previous system to the Baltimore Career Center Network. As described in the local application for state One-Stop implementation funds and certification, the planned changes include the following transitions:

- from services limited to categorically eligible customers to services open to the public;
- from a service flow beginning with eligibility determination to one beginning with information sessions and access to self-service computers;
- from a primary activity of enrollment and placement to one of providing comprehensive on-site services;
- from few referrals between agencies to comprehensive collaboration among partner agencies and programs;
- from services that emphasize referral to class-size training to services that include a wide range of service options, including computerized self-service training, on-site class-size training, vouchers to attend training at a variety of public or private training providers, on-the-job training, and customized training;
- from basic skills remediation by referral to on-site computer-assisted remediation;
- from differentiated service sites each offering access to special funding streams to homogenized sites offering a common menu of services across centers;
- from a method of serving employers that encouraged competition among agencies to one encouraging coordination and collaboration;
- from an emphasis on client case management to an emphasis on customer choice and satisfaction;
- from a variety of centers with unique identities to a shared network identity;
- from distinct technologies at each center to a shared CareerNet technology.

With tactical support from the state's One-Stop Steering Committee, the Baltimore local partners proceeded to negotiate local site agreements for sharing staff and resources on a site-by-site basis. When the old MOED Eastside Center arranged to move to a new location and obtained state funds to rehabilitate an old warehouse facility that would have space to accommodate staff from additional partner agencies, it became the first site to operationalize the One-Stop vision. The Eastside Career Center officially opened as a One-Stop facility on January 1, 1996. Job Service staff joined the Center in February, 1996.

An Implementation Plan for the Baltimore Career Center Network for 1996 included three major objectives to ensure the development of a common approach across all network sites and local partners: (1) coordinate job development efforts among local One-Stop partners; (2) provide universal access to integrated employment and training services; and (3) transition staff to a One-Stop system and establish economies of scale through integrated staff responsibilities.

To pursue the first objective of coordinated job development, the local partners have convened a cross-agency "job development team" assigned to develop a "job development protocol" that will clarify how local partners will conduct coordinated efforts to market each other's services/customers to employers without duplication of effort. In addition, the members of the job development team will establish procedures to set and monitor system-wide job development goals.

To achieve the second objective of universal access and integrated services, several strategies are being pursued. First, the local implementation grant funds are being used to develop an electronic referral system so that staff at any site have the ability to schedule services at other sites for customers. Second, a generic brochure and customer service sheets will be used to provide information about the One-Stop services to customers at all centers. Third, a resource library is being developed at each of the centers. Fourth, to make services truly universal, efforts are being made to coordinate career center activities with local youth-oriented activities.

To achieve the third objective of integrated staff responsibilities, several strategies are being pursued. First, training plans are being developed to make staff more knowledgeable about all network services. Second, the responsibility for providing UI profiling workshops will be decentralized to each center. Third, the responsibility for rapid response services will be assumed by the network as a whole, rather than being centralized in the dislocated worker program operated by AFL-CIO.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

Although the Eastside Center is clearly influenced by its history as a JTPA service center that targets services to categorically eligible customers, a new paradigm of universal access is taking root, thanks to the availability of the CareerNet technology and services. As staff indicated, "everybody who comes through this door is a CareerNet client." To supplement the CareerNet self-service options available to the general public, the Eastside Career Center has participated in acquiring and testing additional computer-assisted learning software (e.g., covering basic skills, typing skills, computer software skills, and job search skills) for a local resource laboratory as well as developing a local multimedia library available for use by all customers.

In addition, the customer flow process has been redesigned to meet the needs of all One-Stop customers. The initial contact with the Center is designed to provide information about the range of services available at the Center and "tie customers immediately into the CareerNet." First year goals for the career center network include having at least 15% of the customers of full-service centers be individuals who are not eligible for targeted programs. To facilitate access by working customers, the Center is open Wednesday evenings until 8:00 p.m. Staff have developed flexible schedules to ensure staff coverage of the expanded Center hours. The state has arranged to have the mainframe computer on which CareerNet is housed operating during these hours, so that customers can use the CareerNet system on Wednesday evenings.

In Baltimore, universal access also requires outreach and the effective marketing of Center services to the residents in Baltimore's high poverty and minority neighborhoods. As part of the Empowerment Zone initiative, CareerNet equipment and software will be installed in six satellite village centers that will be staffed by community-based organizations. If they operate as envisioned, village centers will be a key link in making career center services accessible to all Baltimoreans.

The Implementation Plan for the Baltimore Career Center Network for 1996 also states, "as part of the universal access mission and given diminishing resources it is important the Career Centers serve Baltimore's youth population." To make sure that career center resources are available to youth, network partners will be coordinating with School-to-Work planning teams to develop ways to make the CareerNet technology accessible to youth and to host groups of youth at the career centers.

Customer Choice

Center staff were careful to explain that a more universal service approach does not, in their view, imply less intensive services. Rather, it requires a process for managing the client flow to ensure that customers receive the appropriate level of services. The mix of services at the Eastside Center is designed to offer a range of service content and intensity so that customers can choose the appropriate level of support.

Staff at the Eastside Career Center explained that the state's investment in the CareerNet technology has played a major role in enhancing customer choice.

However, they also indicated that "Career Centers must go well beyond technology." Technology-based products and self-paced computer labs and self-directed resources are viewed as extremely valuable for a high percentage of the population, because "not everybody needs hand-holding." However, the design of services at the Eastside Center is intended to supplement self-service offerings with a system of more intensive services "on the job training side" when appropriate. For individuals who need more help, the Eastside Center is designed to offer a variety of services that can be "wrapped around the customer."

Even the more intensive services offered using JTPA funds are now being designed to empower the customer. For example, instead of a single two-week-long employment preparation seminar, the Center offers JTPA participants a variety of short-term workshops on different employment-related topics. Additionally, the new model for supporting individualized retraining—Career Management Accounts—enables individuals to pursue self-directed training as long as they can document that the training will be effective in pursuing their career objectives.

Integrated Services

As described above, the Baltimore CareerNet System goes substantially beyond the state's minimum One-Stop requirements: designating a local agency(ies) to host the state's CareerNet system and coordinating referrals among local JTPA, ES/UI, and community college partners through electronic linkages. At the Eastside Career Center, the local JTPA staff have invited their ES/UI partners to join Center operations through *selective co-location of staff* and *participation in an integrated interagency service design process and the development of an integrated staffing plan for the delivery of services to Center customers*. This strategy has resulted in the development of additional One-Stop services, including a redesigned Information Session, locally-initiated computer-assisted training options, a series of cross-staffed workshops and seminars for job-seeker customers, and the beginnings of a consolidated system of account executives and services oriented to the needs of employer customers.

These services are presented to customers as part of an integrated service system. Involvement of all Center-based JTPA and ES/UI staff in functional teams to address Center management and service design issues has resulted in the forging of a common sense of purpose among all staff based at the Eastside Center.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Local MOED staff are active members of the performance measures work group of the state's CareerNet steering committee, which had held only two meetings at the time of the site visit. Respondents indicated that they were in general agreement with the six broad outcome goals established by the state (increased customer utilization, increased employer utilization, increased customer satisfaction, increased labor market penetration, increased life-long learning, and greater agency participation and coordination). However, they indicated that deciding how to measure progress toward realizing each of these goals, collecting relevant data, and deciding how to measure baseline conditions are formidable challenges.

In their local One-Stop application to the state, the partners in the Baltimore CareerNet System set several performance goals for the first year of the implementation period (to be compared to performance during Program Year 1994):

- *to increase the level of coordination and collaboration of services across sites and funding agencies*, as measured by a 10% increase in the number of individuals served by more than one program;
- *to increase the level of uniformity of services available across different sites and agencies* as measured by the number of similar services;
- *to maintain the existing service levels for the funding streams administered by system partners*, such as JTPA and Job Service;
- *to increase the number of customers receiving multiple services and the total number of services received by a typical Center customer;*
- *to increase the number of jobs listed* in the automated Job Bank by 5%;
- *to increase the number of customers from the "general public,"* such that 15% of Center customers will be beyond the pool eligible for JTPA and other categorical programs, and 2% of customers will be already employed at the time they receive services.

In an effort to establish integrated "production" goals for the CareerNet Centers, the local partners are measuring the following outcomes for Center customers on a monthly and annual basis: (1) the number of job placements for all customers as well as the number of job placements for JTPA customers; (2) the daily traffic flow through the Center; (3) the number of enrollments in the automated Job Bank; (4) the number of individuals attending a JTPA employment preparation seminar, participating in self-paced training in the local resource laboratory, or participating in GED training or a skills brush-up class. Production statistics are reviewed monthly as part of a Center "performance review," which compares agency performance against goals.

The Eastside Center collects information about customer satisfaction after the initial Information Session as well as after the completion of each group workshop. In addition, a mail survey is used to assess customer satisfaction with Center services overall. One of the objectives of the mail survey is to identify additional services that customers would be interested in receiving. The emphasis on performance outcomes at the Eastside Center has also influenced the development of a performance evaluation system for individual staff including instructors, employer account executives, and workshop leaders. Staff performance is assessed, at least in part, by the production outcomes and level of customer satisfaction reported by customers receiving services from each staff member.

Local One-Stop partners expressed concern that the national accountability measures used to assess performance for the individual categorical programs making up the One-Stop partnerships are not changing to reflect the new system goals and objectives. For example, the traditional Job Service performance measures, which emphasize service and placement volume, are not designed to recognize the improvement of customer services that is taking place within One-Stop centers. This, respondents cautioned, has the potential to undermine the local One-Stop partnerships. Thus, local respondents identified unification of accountability systems at both the state and local level as a high priority issue, necessary to cement the foundation of local One-Stop partnerships.

Physical Facilities

The Eastside Center occupies a renovated warehouse on a street with mixed residential/warehouse uses in densely populated East Baltimore, about a mile from Johns Hopkins Medical Center. The modest exterior disguises a spacious and well laid-out interior space. The first room into which customers enter is a reception/waiting area. The waiting area is coordinated by Center clerical staff who assist new customers in understanding what services are available at the Center. In the reception area, leaflets are displayed describing the available Center services and a sign-in sheet is used to document customer arrivals. A "motivational" video can be viewed by waiting customers. Clerical staff also assist customers in using the copy machine and fax machines that are located in the reception/clerical area.

The Eastside Center has two different rooms with CareerNet workstations, with a total of 17 CareerNet workstations available for customer use. The main CareerNet resource room—with 12 workstations—has a resource area specialist on duty at all times. The second room—with 5 workstations—is an unstaffed room off the reception/waiting area, for use by customers who are already familiar with the system.

A portion of the larger CareerNet room is currently reserved for use as a "local resource laboratory" by customers interested in using computer-assisted instructional programs, such as self-paced basic skills and typing drills, a computer-assisted resume preparation program, and computer-assisted career exploration and instruction in job search skills. The 10 computers in the local resource laboratory were provided by the state as part of the CareerNet infrastructure, but are currently networked to a local server that provides access to the programs described above. The CareerNet room also has a resource library with written materials on local educational and training resources as well as a growing collection of books and articles on job search topics.

Staff offices are open to the general use areas, with staff organized by general functional area (e.g., Job Service/JTPA employer account representatives; JTPA case managers, who are referred to as "employment development specialists"). As a result, staff are generally accessible to customers who need to consult them.

Four classrooms/conference rooms are used for a variety of on-site classes and workshops, and are also available for use by employers wishing to conduct Center-based interviews with job applicants. A "phone bank" room is used for job clubs. Conference rooms are also used for meetings involving local CareerNet system partners. For a modest fee, conference rooms may also be used for community meetings involving other local agencies or organizations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

Most of the 25 to 30 staff housed at the Eastside Center are employees of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development. Center staff also include three Maryland Job Service employees who volunteered to be located at the Eastside Center (they were previously assigned to the main Job Service office in downtown Baltimore).

All staff share a number of common One-Stop staff assignments, in addition to their particular job duties. The integrated staff assignments, shared among all Center staff, include: (1) helping customers in the CareerNet room use the automated services and other resource materials, (2) teaching the Center's group workshops and seminars, and (3) leading the Information Sessions for new customers.[7] The decision to rotate the "resource area specialist" function rather than dedicate one staff position to this function was made for two reasons. First, Center staff have found this job extremely demanding. Second, it has been valuable to have all staff be cross-trained in the use of the CareerNet automated system and have a clear understanding of how these services can meet customer needs.

Specialized functional units at the Center include the following:

- Members of the *Clerical Pool* are responsible for providing reception services, providing information and referral services, and giving technical assistance to customers who are already familiar with the CareerNet or resource library through prior visits to the Center.
- Staff assigned to the *Program Development Unit* help to design and oversee several network-wide functions, as well as provide services to Eastside Center customers. Staff in this unit are responsible for managing on-the-job training and individual classroom training through the "career management account" demonstration as well as carrying out One-Stop system development and dissemination activities funded under the One-Stop learning laboratory grant from DOL.
- The *Employment Development Specialist Unit*, whose staff will soon be renamed "customer service representatives," provide enrollment and case management functions to individual JTPA enrollees. In addition, they participate in providing the core One-Stop functions. Under a planned citywide decentralization of dislocated worker services, staff within this unit will also be responsible for rapid response functions associated with large-scale layoffs.
- The *Job Service Unit* is staffed by a supervisor and two additional staff who provide Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services and veterans employment services. In addition, because these positions are funded with Wagner-Peyser funds, staff in the Job Service unit may provide individualized job search assistance to all Center customers , even if they are not JTPA-eligible.
- Staff in a final unit are responsible for a wide variety of job-seeker and employer customer services. The unit supervisor is responsible for the development of the local resource laboratory; two *employer account*

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[7] The Job Service staff responsible for Veterans Employment Services is excused from these integrated service functions, because the funding source requires her to serve only veterans.

executives develop jobs and coordinate closely with the Employ Baltimore initiative. Staff within this unit also provide on-site GED instruction and skills brush-up classes and facilitate the on-site job club.

According to local respondents, the Center managers encourage staff participation in decision-making, as well as shared responsibilities for setting and reaching common Center goals. The sense of a unified and empowered staff is further developed and supported by the integrated physical layout of Center staff and functions, and the scheduling of formal team-building events. These arrangements appear to have created and sustained a high level of morale among Center staff, even in the face of expected 25% cutbacks in MOED's budget for PY1996 and anticipated staff layoffs.

Capacity Building

As described in the Maryland state profile, the Maryland Institute for Employment and Training Professionals (MIETP) has been selected as the vehicle for training to support One-Stop implementation throughout the state. Because MIETP is supported by membership payments from state and local partners, staff employed by the welfare, JTPA, and Job Service systems may attend MIETP training sessions for a nominal fee ($10 per session).

During the first year of One-Stop implementation, the training emphasis for direct service staff was on use of the new computer technology. At the time of the evaluation site visit, direct service staff from the Eastside Center were in the process of attending the MIETP training that had been developed for resource area specialists, which included training on the role of the resource specialists and training on the different software programs within the CareerNet system. Eastside Center mangers had previously participated in the orientation to One-Stop for local managers. MIETP training offerings appear to have been well-received at the local level.

Recent staff development activities at the Eastside Center not directly associated with One-Stop implementation have included training on technical skills (Lotus, Word Perfect, use of the Internet) and problem solving skills. Local respondents commented that the implementation of the Career Center system has made staff want to be more knowledgeable about "the big picture" and how all the Center services relate to each other. Thus, "capacity building" at the Eastside Center has been associated not only with staff gaining discrete new skills, but with staff becoming more involved in trying new things and understanding how to make the system as a whole work better. As a result, staff are also sharing more information among themselves.

One of the major capacity-building challenges in the coming year will be training the small community-based staffs of the village centers to help neighborhood customers use the CareerNet equipment and software that will soon be housed at the village centers. Resources from the Learning Laboratory Grant will be used to train these staff.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The institution of the One-Stop system has not yet resulted in the development of new information systems or integration of existing management information systems at the local level. The state's CareerNet system collects information from all users of the automated system via the automated job bank registration/eligibility determination screens. The JTPA system maintains a client-level MIS system of its own within the local service area that is not yet linked to the CareerNet system. Local partners have not yet made arrangements for sharing customer information (e.g., case management or service information) via electronic data exchange among different CareerNet sites.

One factor encouraging the development of an integrated information system at the local level is the desire to be able to measure system-wide performance based on a variety of output and outcome measures. Although the Baltimore network is beginning to develop consolidated performance objectives (e.g., for the total number of job placements to be achieved across all local partners), there is not currently an integrated MIS system that can be used to aggregate achievements by all partners. As a first step, both MOED and Job Service are beginning to produce monthly performance reports that summarize production statistics across all partner programs.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

As described in the Maryland state profile, the state's automated CareerNet system includes three major customer-focused service clusters: (1) a *labor exchange cluster*, including an automated job bank and on-line job search assistance; (2) a *career exploration cluster*, including information on careers, labor market demand and qualifications, and occupations suited to individual skills, interests, and abilities; and (3) a *customer development cluster* that enables individuals to obtain information about education and training opportunities and sources of student financial support in the locality and statewide.

Local staff generally spoke very highly of these state-initiated products. However, they indicated that the listing of local employment and training providers in the CareerNet customer development cluster was not complete. To address this gap, local staff have developed a local menu to provide additional information on local providers and additional information on community resources. In addition, local staff indicated that a relatively high level of staff support is necessary to assist customers in their use of CareerNet services. Part of this need is due to "bugs" in the system that result from linking all local workstations to a single mainframe computer; these will be resolved after the state installs local area networks to support the CareerNet software. However, respondents indicated that, even after the "bugs" are corrected, CareerNet users are likely to require substantial support from Center staff. To address this situation, the local learning laboratory staff are developing a non-technical users' guide to CareerNet.

A local resource laboratory developed for the Eastside Center is testing ways to supplement the state's automated CareerNet services with additional computer-assisted instructional software. Services available on the ten computers used for the local resource laboratory include:

- a computer-assisted resume writing program;
- self-paced basic skills and GED instruction (*Plato*);
- self-paced job search instruction;
- career exploration and identification of transferable skills (*Oasys);*
- a typing tutorial (*Mavis*);
- a word-processing tutorial (*Word Perfect*).

Staff would like to add *Windows* and *Lotus* tutorials to the instructional programs available in the local resource laboratory.

Marketing

Marketing to Employers. In July, 1995, the Employ Baltimore campaign was initiated to advertise the services of the Career Center Network to local employers using television, radio, brochures, and public speakers. Additional marketing strategies included using the personal contacts of employer service representatives in agencies throughout the Career Center Network and "getting information out to community groups." Employers who respond to the marketing campaign are assisted with immediate job referrals, as well as funneled to appropriate service sites throughout the Career Center network if they need more specialized services.

Through a "job development protocol" workgroup, all the local partners and service providers in the Baltimore Career Center network are currently working together to develop more detailed marketing materials for employers as well as a common protocol for the delivery of employer services. At the time of the evaluation site visit, the local partners had identified the need for a common marketing brochure and system of public service announcements to educate local employers about the integrated career center network and the services available to employers. In addition, partners identified a goal of establishing a home page on the Internet as a marketing vehicle for network services to employers.

Marketing to Job-Seekers. Marketing and outreach to job-seeker customers throughout the career center network include participation by MOED staff in community outreach events (block parties, job fairs, community and school events) and the distribution of brochures and flyers describing Career Center services. A one-page flyer advertising the Eastside Career Center announces: "Doors to Careers: One stop for your employment needs!" and lists the range of services available at the Center. To further educate customers about the services available at the Eastside Center, a series of one-page "customer services sheets" has been prepared for each of the services offered. Each sheet includes a description of the service, as well as scheduling and enrollment information. Job Service workers processing UI claims also have an important role to play in marketing Career Center services to UI applicants/beneficiaries.

One of the goals of marketing One-Stop Career Centers to the job-seeking public is to expand the pool of clients to include individuals with more diverse employment backgrounds and skills. However, the city decided to go for a "soft rollout" of universal One-Stop services, rather than a high profile advertising campaign, at least until they "were sure [they]...could deliver high quality services" to higher skilled workers.

The Baltimore Career Center Network will be participating in the use of a state-developed CareerNet logo and signage to identify sites with the CareerNet hardware and software. However, the state CareerNet logo will have lots of competition from identifying marks already used by local partners. For example, flyers currently used by the Eastside Center display the Employ Baltimore logo as well as the logos of the City of Baltimore, the Private Industry Council, and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development. Given the proliferation of distinct but related initiatives in Baltimore, the use of multiple advertising logos will probably continue to be the rule, rather than the exception.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Customers interested in using Center services are asked to sign up for an initial Information Session that provides an orientation to the Center. During the Information Session, customers:

- *view a video that provides an overview of the Center and its services*, using examples of how Center services have addressed the varying needs of different job-seeker and employer customers;
- *listen to a brief presentation and question-and-answer session by Center staff that highlights key services* that may be available to Center customers, including automated CareerNet services, job match/job referral services, on-site training workshops, on-the-job training opportunities, and classroom training offered by other educational institutions/training vendors;
- *go on a guided walk-through tour of the Center* to see the various service areas and get an idea of how the space is laid out for customer use;
- *review "customer service" sheets* that describe each different service offered at the Center and the times it is available;
- *sign on the CareerNet system* and receive an initial orientation to automated job bank and career information (part of the initial registration on CareerNet is a screen that asks for information to help determine what categorical programs, if any, a customer will qualify for).

A total of nine Information Sessions are scheduled each week. Actual attendance at each Information Session averages 15 to 20 individuals. The Center experiences a relative high "no show" rate among customers who sign up for Information Sessions.

After attending the group Information Session, individuals interested only in the automated CareerNet services (or in the job club or resume writing class, which are both open to the general public) are free to use these services. Individuals who are interested in additional services are scheduled for an individual assessment interview to check the accuracy of the eligibility information entered into the CareerNet system.

Individuals eligible for JTPA services who are interested in participating in intensive class-size classroom training or individual training through a "career management account" are given a referral to an employment development specialist who assists the customer in development an individual services plan. Customers interested in classroom training are also scheduled for a more intensive assessment, including administration of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE).

Services for Individual Customers

Services available to individual job seeker customers at the Eastside Center fall into several different categories.

Automated or self-directed options available to the general public include:

- access to the state's *CareerNet automated system* (17 workstations), which offers customers access to job registration, job listings, career interest inventories, information about local education and training resources, and an initial assessment of eligibility for different programs;
- services available in the *resource laboratory* (10 workstations), including a computer-assisted resume writing program; self-paced basic skills and GED instruction; self-paced job search instruction; computer-assisted career exploration and identification of transferable skills; typing and word processing tutorials;
- access to a *local resource library* containing written and multi-media materials pertaining to community services, employment and training services, training opportunities, labor market information, and job search methods.

Additional services available to the general public include assistance from Job Service interviewers on job search/placement issues. A veterans employment service representative is also available for individualized counseling/job search support for veterans. Job search counseling/assistance to UI profilees is about to be added to the menu of services available from Center staff.

Although application for UI benefits is currently available at full-service One-Stop centers, the long-range service objective is to centralize the management of UI services at the main office of the Job Service in downtown Baltimore. Ultimately, UI registration will be completed over the telephone. UI profiling will be used as a tool to "disperse the UI traffic" back to the different Career Centers that are part of the network.

A variety of *short-term seminars and workshops* are available at the Center. The Center is struggling with how to make these services available to the general public. Currently, only the job club and the resume preparation workshops are available to the general public. A 10-hour "early intervention" workshop is offered to profiled UI recipients. All other seminars are reserved for JTPA enrollees. Group workshops include the following:

- *Job Club* is offered in two- and three-hour sessions, four days a week. Participants in the job club receive peer support and staff assistance in exploring occupations and identifying and pursuing job leads. A phone bank and newspapers are provided to support job search efforts and participants are given the opportunity to update their resumes.
- *Career Exploration* is a workshop offered in two-hour sessions, three days a week. During this workshop, participants are assisted in identifying interests, skills, abilities, and values, and matching them to specific occupations. Participants are also provided with information about different training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- *Resume Writing* is a two-day workshop.
- *Setting Goals for Success* is a two-hour workshop offered once a week. Participants discuss values and setting long-term career goals, and learn how to explore career alternatives.
- *Communicating to Get the Job You Want* is a workshop scheduled twice a week that teaches participants how to communicate clearly and effectively. Topics cover verbal and non-verbal communication skills, listening skills, and writing skills related to completing effective job applications and interviews.
- A *Second Chance Workshop*, available twice a week in a two-hour session, is targeted to individuals who are encountering difficulty in their job search. Topics covered include identifying individual strengths and weaknesses and handling job interviews.
- *Workplace Skills* is a 12-hour workshop taking place over 4 days that is designed to give participants the skills needed to keep a job.
- *Early Intervention* is a 10-hour workshop offered to UI profilees. At the time of the site visit, this service was still being offered by AFL-CIO staff at the dislocated worker center. Plans were underway to decentralize this workshop to each Center.

Training in basic educational skills and occupational skills is reserved for Center customers enrolled in JTPA programs.

- *GED Training* is offered on-site three hours a day four days a week. Classroom instruction is linked with computer-assisted instruction in this intensive training activity.
- *Occupational training* funded under JTPA Titles II or III includes class-size training, on-the-job or customized training developed for specific employers, and individual training vouchers provided through the Career Management Accounts demonstration. Over time, MOED is evolving away from contracting for a series of "class-size" training programs (e.g., in clerical/computer, janitorial, cooking, etc.) and toward increased use of individual referrals to a large list of approved public and proprietary training vendors.

Under the Career Management Accounts demonstration, Career Center customers are able to research and develop individualized training plans. The burden of the responsibility for researching training providers is placed on the individual applicants. The application process requires applicants to interview training providers as well as two employers in the field to ensure that they are informed about the work environment and type of work involved.

Services for Employer Customers

Employer services are consolidated and coordinated under the Employ Baltimore initiative. Services advertised include: free listings on the computerized job bank, free screening and referral of job seekers that "match" the employer's description, access to services provided by a single "account executive," access to a variety of tax credits (e.g., for hiring Empowerment Zone residents), and free on-site or off-site customized training for targeted job seekers. Employers who respond to the marketing campaign are assisted with immediate job referrals, as well as funneled to appropriate service sites throughout the Career Center network if they need more specialized services.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

A focus group discussion was conducted with participants in a four-day workplace skills workshop. Individuals were all JTPA enrollees. Participants described a variety of individual experiences prior to coming to the Eastside Center. The common theme expressed by respondents about their experiences at the Eastside Center was "You feel like you are *someone* here and that your decisions are important." "It doesn't feel like you are wasting your time." One customer said, "I came in wanting a job. Now I want a job that fits my abilities and skill level." Another said, "It helped to learn about the different steps to getting a job."

Employers

No information was obtained from employer customers during the site visit.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The One-Stop services developed at the Eastside Career Center reflect a balanced commitment to making workforce development services available to the general public and making sure that services continue to be accessible to and appropriate for residents of Baltimore's most disadvantaged communities. The successes of the Eastside Center demonstrate what can happen when a JTPA service provider with well-developed services for economically disadvantaged and dislocated workers joins forces with a Job Service partner that can help market services to employers and broaden the customer base to include a wider range of job-seekers.

Under the career center initiative, Center staff have developed a customer flow process that provides One-Stop customers with information about the range of available services and allows customers to request more intensive services if they are interested. Although staff are trying to create as few barriers as possible for access to more intensive services (e.g., by making the marketing materials for career management accounts appropriate to an audience with limited reading skills), they perceive that there will be a self-selection process under the current system that favors the more job-ready, or at least the more motivated among potential system users. For example, individuals who don't have the skills or initiative to research individual training options will not be able to receive training under the career management account system.

Some Center staff worry about what will happen to the "most at risk" under the emerging One-Stop system. Nevertheless, the Eastside Center reflects ongoing attention to comprehensive customer needs, including a broad range of basic skills, decision making skills, motivational/self-esteem issues, and occupational skills. Although the style of service delivery is changing, e.g., from "doing for" customers to providing information and supporting them to "do for themselves," the assessment of customers' needs and the desire to provide relevant services remains unchanged.

Local respondents identified the next logical stages in One-Stop development as making progress in generating revenues to support Center services, building a stronger relationship with local communities, identifying unmet needs (e.g., services targeted to ex-offenders), and developing resources to address those unmet needs. Respondents identified having staff who are flexible as key to meeting the further system-building challenges.

APPENDIX L

COLUMBIA EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING CENTER
COLUMBIA, MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During March 1996

COLUMBIA EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING CENTER
COLUMBIA, MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

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COLUMBIA EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING CENTER
COLUMBIA, MARYLAND
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The "Columbia Employment & Training Center" ("Center") is located in a small strip mall in the town of Columbia. It is part of the "Mid-Maryland SDA," a two-county SDA that includes neighboring Carroll County. Columbia is a "planned" suburban community, originally designed to be a place that people "go *to* to get away *from*." For the most part, it is a bedroom community; the majority of its residents commute outside the area for employment. Although much has changed since the late 1940's when the community was planned, it is still a fairly affluent area, with a low unemployment rate relative to the remainder of the state.

According to the primary local partners, the Center's relatively new status as a state-recognized "One-Stop/*CareerNet* Center" represents a logical extension of years of working cooperatively and collaboratively, and continual movement towards an emerging vision of co-located services within a well-defined workforce development network. Partners believe that the vision of the Center incorporates fundamental cultural change—from "come in and we'll help you" to "come in and we'll help you help yourself." This is consistent with the state's One-Stop vision, which incorporates personal empowerment and individual decision-making supported by the provision of high-quality information and services delivered chiefly through the use of automation and technology. Ideally, local One-Stop players would like the Center to be the hub of workforce development services in Howard County. It is hoped that the One-Stop/*CareerNet* initiative will be the catalyst for increased coordination among numerous entities, activities, and initiatives.

Several factors are influencing the context within which the local One-Stop/*CareerNet* vision is emerging and taking shape. Contextual variables that have significantly impacted local One-Stop design, implementation, and progress include: (1) the local demographics; (2) status as a One-Stop pilot site; and (3) a dynamic political and organizational context. Each is briefly described below.

- *The demographics of Howard County have precipitated a local One-Stop approach that is responsive to the needs of the local community,* *with an emphasis on services to the transitionally unemployed.* The majority of Howard County residents are well-educated and employed in professional and technical occupations. The Center has evolved based on the needs of the local community. Hence, although the Center offers services to targeted populations both on-site and through referral, the overwhelming majority of Center customers are unemployed adults who need assistance transitioning from one job to another.

- *The Center is one of the first two One-Stop pilot sites in Maryland. This has significantly enhanced local efforts.* Having received an ES Revitalization grant in the fall of 1994 to create a "Resource Area" for individual customers, the Center was in an ideal position to become a local One-Stop pilot. Local respondents believed that being a pilot site was a "luxury" that afforded them numerous opportunities, including the chance to try out new equipment, system features, and processes. Moreover, being directly involved in statewide One-Stop design and implementation and, in general, "having the state's ear" were cited as both fortuitous and beneficial.
- *The dynamic context within which One-Stop is emerging offers many challenges. There is much "in limbo"—from budget crunches to personnel changes to organizational issues to welfare reform.* For example, as of 10/1/96, the state agency responsible for the JOBS program will no longer be jointly administering the program with the state agency responsible for JTPA. Therefore, the local JTPA entity will no longer be the presumptive deliverer of JOBS services. Even the local DSS manager was not certain to what extent the SDA would be involved in the delivery of services for JOBS clients. Additionally, the co-location of JTPA and Job Service staff within the Center represents a challenge in hard fiscal times because the JTPA entity currently leases space at the Center, although it could occupy free county space in another location. Moreover, there are several personnel changes that have taken place throughout the SDA. Indeed, shortly after the One-Stop site visit, due to budget cutbacks, the county-level JTPA Supervisor—a key One-Stop actor—was laid off.

Finally, it is important to note that the Howard County Employment & Training Center has only been "operational" since late October, 1995. Many activities, services and processes were still being conceptualized at the time of the site visit.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Consistent with state requirements, a *Local Planning & Management Team* was formed to guide One-Stop implementation and progress in the Mid-Maryland SDA. As required by the state, the Local Team includes representation from the Private Industry Council, the SDA Director, the Job Service manager, a representative of the local community college, and an additional employer. Because the SDA consists of two counties, however, membership on the Local Team had to be "doubled" in some cases. For instance, a representative from Howard County Community College is a part of the Local Team, as is a representative from Carroll County Community College.

Despite formal status as an SDA-wide formal governing body, in actuality, there are two Local Planning and Management Teams: one that guides One-Stop progress in Howard County, and one that guides One-Stop progress in Carroll County. Partners believe this to be a necessary arrangement due to the differences between the counties, including different county governments, different demographics and, for some funding streams, largely independent workforce delivery systems.

Within Howard County, there are four primary partners involved in the local One-Stop initiative. Thus, the Local Team includes one more entity than is required by the state.

- The JTPA unit in Howard County;
- The local Job Service and Unemployment Insurance (which are co-located and jointly managed);
- The Howard County Community College; and
- The "Business Resource Center" of the local Economic Development Authority.

JTPA and Job Service staff are co-located at the Center. There is a strong history of cooperation between the two entities, which have been physically located within the same strip mall since 1994, and co-located in the Center's present integrated facility within the strip mall for the past year. Day-to-day management and operation of the Center is the responsibility of both partners, although responsibility for the *CareerNet* equipment resides with the Job Service, the entity initially located in the present facility.

The Howard County Community College (HCCC) and the Business Resource Center (BRC) are both housed in a nearby county facility. There is a strong historical relationship between JTPA and the HCCC. As a major JTPA contractor, the college currently administers various components of the JOBS program (e.g., job readiness skills).

The BRC is a private, non-profit entity established as part of the local Economic Development Authority nearly one year ago. Its primary purpose is to leverage economic development resources and coordinate business-related activities that may be provided by various entities, including the Small Business Development Center (affiliated with the U.S. Small Business Administration) and the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE). Local respondents from various entities believed that the BRC represented an essential "piece" of the local One-Stop initiative—the business perspective.

Although respondents believe that increasing the number of partner entities on the Local Team would be beneficial, the recent operational status of the Center, in addition to other numerous priorities, mitigates against this at the present time. However, two additional entities are currently involved in Howard County's One-Stop initiative as "coordinating partners":

- The local Department of Social Services (DSS); and
- Careerscope, which is a private, non-profit entity providing customized on-site workshops for JTPA customers.

Local respondents believe that all partners operate in a "synergistic" fashion and "plug into" the resources of one another. For example, through its relationship with the Center, the BRC is able to offer relocating businesses access to skilled workers. BRC also provides various services either directly or through referral, including business counseling and entrepreneurship training, which is a primary training area for the Center's customers.

In addition, partners believe that including the local DSS as a coordinating partner is indicative of the county's proactive approach toward impending welfare reform. A locally-designed welfare reform program—called *Jobs First*—was initiated 1/1/96 and is fortuitously consistent with the statewide plans for welfare reform. Local partners believe that the One-Stop/*CareerNet* system will support welfare reform efforts by providing individuals with high-quality information and services to assist them in negotiating speedier labor force attachment.

Partner entities caution that the Center is "just beginning." Plans for further refinement and expansion of the local system include, for example, the establishment of "Career Information Centers" within the HCCC and the BRC over the next year. (Part of the state's conceptual framework for One-Stop includes a network of supplementary sites from which *CareerNet* will be accessible.) Key local respondents also envision other agencies and entities outstationing staff at the Center on a periodic basis. At the present time, for instance, staff of the HCCC are at the Center once a week to provide on-site ABE and GED classes. Similarly, Careerscope staff spend much of their time at the Center providing job search and other workshops.

In summary, the organization of the One-Stop initiative in Howard County is characterized by: (1) a collaborative and cooperative network built around a state-recognized One-Stop/*CareerNet* Center that houses two key partner agencies and whose primary customer base is the transitionally unemployed; (2) two additional key partners co-located with each other, but in a separate facility; (3) the inclusion of a local economic development component to incorporate the business perspective; (4) a strong emphasis on referral arrangements among primary and coordinating partners; and (5) the desire to increase coordination and cooperative arrangements among additional community and public programs/initiatives.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Although local One-Stop players perceive the establishment of formal communication and coordination mechanisms as crucial to future One-Stop progress, plans for structured mechanisms are not yet planned or in place due to the newly operational status of the Center and the local One-Stop system. As the Center continues through its "operational" phase, it is envisioned that there will be opportunities to enhance communication and coordination, including cross-training and regularly scheduled meetings among partner agency staff.

Currently, local partners have the opportunity to interact through regular PIC Board meetings. Additional opportunities to interact are offered by meetings related to the local welfare reform initiative, which involves many of the same agencies involved in the One-Stop initiative. There are also frequent and informal communications among the Center's JTPA Supervisor and other partner entities by virtue of contractual and other relationships. For instance, because JTPA is a key provider of JOBS services, the JTPA Supervisor regularly interacts with the local DSS Director. This also involves the local community college, as the primary training vendor for JTPA services. Moreover, the JTPA Supervisor regularly attends weekly meetings of the local Economic Development Authority to keep abreast of ways in which the Center can be responsive to the business community. Furthermore, the co-location of ES and JTPA facilitates communication between supervisors of the two partners, so that ES is regularly kept informed of interactions with other players. JTPA, therefore, effectively serves as the center of an informal communications network through which partners are kept informed of activities related to the local One-Stop and other initiatives. Although this arrangement is currently satisfactory, an over-reliance on personal relationships may make the system vulnerable in the event of staff turnover.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

In addition to a 1994 ES Revitalization grant of $75,000, a $21,000 One-Stop planning grant, and the distribution of *CareerNet* hardware and software, the local One-Stop initiative is supported primarily by the distinct operational budgets of partner agencies. Although partners coordinate in terms of the planning and delivery of specific services (e.g., workshops), there is presently no consolidation or integration of funding, which is perceived as prohibitive in the current environment of multiple funding streams and requirements.

The physical Center facility is supported by two separate leases held by the JTPA entity and the ES/UI entity. The status of "county property" and "state property" is both omnipresent and frustrating for local staff, who perceive the "separation due to finances" as contrary to the One-Stop concept. Thus, the JTPA partner has a lease for space at the Center with the county and the building owner; the ES/UI partner has a lease with the state and building owner. Similarly, all of JTPA's supplies are county property and are ordered separately from ES/UI; JTPA staff have their own copy machine, as does the Job Service staff.

There are currently no written financial agreements between the two co-located partner agencies. Financial "arrangements" are informal and verbal in nature, primarily due to funding restrictions and the difficulty of mingling in any way "county" and "state" funds. For similar reasons, there are no jointly-funded projects. Indeed, funding requirements and restrictions that effectively preclude joint expenditures due to the complexity involved are perceived as both frustrating and constrictive, especially in a One-Stop context. Local One-Stop actors expressed a need to be both creative and resourceful within current requirements but found the level of effort this required to be unsettling. By way of example, the inability to purchase paint to enhance part of the facility was so problematic due to "bureaucatic red tape" that local staff used personal funds and time to purchase supplies and paint part of the Center. Because of its less restrictive requirements, Wagner-Peyser funds were cited as "a great plug for the peculiarities of other programs," affording partners some "financial wiggle room."

(For instance, a copy machine used by Center participants is paid for with ES funds, regardless of the participant's program eligibility.) ES respondents at both the state and local levels did not believe that this "benefit" of Wagner-Peyser funds to the One-Stop effort was sufficiently recognized nationally.

Although block grants are perceived as potentially facilitative of integration efforts (e.g., by minimizing "turf" issues), local respondents are also wary that the reduced funding associated with block grants may mean streamlining programs to the point of lowered effectiveness—concerns echoed at the state level as well. Regardless of the future, respondents believed that the state's One-Stop/*CareerNet* vision, and the local variant, would provide a supportive philosophy and delivery framework for whatever workforce development legislation is eventually passed.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

The primary catalyst for reengineered services and service delivery mechanisms in Howard County was the ES Revitalization initiative. In the fall of 1994, the local Job Service received a $75,000 ES Revitalization grant to create a "resource area" within its facility that would include an array of labor market information and related materials, in addition to a computer work area for use by self-directed customers. Shortly thereafter, staff of the Howard County JTPA unit relocated into space adjacent to the Job Service. Soon after these developments, the state of Maryland received a One-Stop implementation grant.

The site in Columbia was selected as a One-Stop pilot because it was clearly "ahead of the curve"—two primary partners were co-located there, and reengineering efforts were already significantly underway. Clearly, things "happened very quickly" in Howard County, with local players having input into the statewide One-Stop initiative from its inception. Indeed, various levels of Center staff felt that the statewide effort *started* in Howard County, accounting for a strong sense of pride among staff. Both JTPA and ES/UI staff believed that ES Revitalization was a "revolution." The state's One-Stop initiative—*CareerNet*—added to it.

The design of the local One-Stop/*CareerNet* initiative is predicated upon existing systems, consistent with the statewide tenet of system *reform*, as opposed to the establishment of new systems. Thus, according to a key local respondent, local design can be expressed as follows: "We combined our programs and kept what was working, and we supplement it with *CareerNet* information." In addition, local One-Stop actors believed that the state-developed One-Stop/*CareerNet* system afforded partners the latitude necessary to incorporate additional features, such as locally-designed workshops tailored to customer needs. The local One-Stop conceptual framework also incorporates the "inverted pyramid" service delivery paradigm—consistent with the state's conceptual framework—whereby the majority of services are delivered through automation and the self-directed use of computer technology. The incorporation of this paradigm within the local vision and design framework makes sense to local One-Stop actors. According to the JTPA Supervisor, "The majority of [Center] customers don't really need one-on-one [assistance]." Because Howard County residents are typically "high-tech and highly paid," local players have created a One-Stop center that "...speaks to the needs of those people."

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

Local One-Stop actors expect the federal goal of *Universal Access* to be achieved through the development of a workforce development network that includes a number of components, some of which are in early stages of development and implementation. For example, partners believe the Center will come to be viewed as a professional entity dedicated to comprehensive and high-quality information and services for individuals and employers where no stigma is attached, similar to public libraries. In addition, various services (or information about services) are or will be accessible within a local network that includes a One-Stop/*CareerNet* Center, two additional Career Information Centers hosted by the Howard County Community College and the Business Resource Center that will also permit access to *CareerNet* hardware and software, as well as other sites that will relate to the Center through detailed articulation and referral agreements (e.g., local DSS offices). Furthermore, in accordance with the state's plans, remote access to labor market and related information by organizations and home users is expected to be available by the end of the implementation grant period.

At present, individuals eligible for specific programs have access to a full range of services that can be accessed at the Center (e.g., workshops), off-site (e.g., community college or Business Resource Center classes), or both. Individuals not eligible for particular programs can access information and various career exploration, assessment, and other services offered through the *CareerNet* computer terminals at the

Center.[1] The inability to allow "general public" customers to access more intensive services due to program requirements and/or the unavailability of "slots" was not perceived as problematic, probably because of the magnitude of services and information that are, or are planned to be, offered on-line through *CareerNet*.

One particular challenge that has emerged with respect to the achievement of this federal objective is the lack of public transportation in Howard County. At the time of the site visit, the County Executive had created a "Transportation Committee." The Center is currently planned to be a stop on the first route of the new transportation system that will be developed.

Customer Choice

Individuals can presently access information and services by visiting the Center. It is also expected that, by November 1996, individuals and employers will be able to dial in and receive the same high-quality, up-to-date information currently offered at the Center. Thus, a local (and state) priority for this year of the implementation period includes various forms of remote access to facilitate the achievement of the federal goal of *Customer Choice*. This includes the planned establishment of the Howard County Community College and the Business Resource Center as state-recognized "Career Information Centers" that offer *CareerNet* services and information.

In addition, for individuals who may be uncomfortable using the self-service technologies, staff assistance is available at the Center from "Resource Area Specialists." This is a new job classification for individuals that specifically assist customers in accessing self-directed information and other resources.

Integrated Services

The automated *CareerNet* system offers high-quality, integrated core services to all system users, irrespective of their eligibility for categorical programs. Beyond these core services, the achievement of the federal objective of *Integrated Services* is currently predicated upon generally informal cooperation and coordination among primary and other partner entities. Customers eligible for categorical programs are referred to the partner entity best suited to provide needed services. For instance, within the Center there are appropriate "hand-offs" from ES/UI to JTPA if someone is in need of training. Similarly, job-ready JOBS customers or customers of the local Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) are referred to the Center for job search and similar types of assistance.

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[1] Although the state's intention is to offer completely unrestricted access to *CareerNet* core services, at the time of the site visit, local staff thought they were supposed to require formal Job Service registration of all system users.

It is clear that partners place a premium on the *coordination* of services in order to achieve the local One-Stop vision of service design and delivery. The only example of true "integration," however, was the local planning process, which included a host of local players that developed the local *CareerNet* planning document. Local respondents did not perceive the lack of fully integrated services as problematic. Indeed, increasing the level of coordination through various means and processes was cited as a viable goal, especially given the recent status of the facility as a state-sanctioned One-Stop/*CareerNet* Center. In addition, consistent with the state's conceptual framework, coordination through a "no-wrong door" or "multi-service center" approach is a clear option for local areas.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Local respondents expressed a need for a *Performance-Driven* and *Outcome-Based* One-Stop system that incorporates outcome, process, and customer satisfaction measures and believed that changes in measurement systems should be "driven by what is important at the local level..." It was believed that current systems, despite differences in requirements and reporting mechanisms, are overly "numbers-driven" and "steeped in such minutae." One key respondent stated that a One-Stop performance measurement system should ideally capture *system-level* accomplishments. This respondent presented a metaphorical view of the current conflict, stating that the One-Stop vision of performance measurement should relate to "teaching a man to fish...." The current system was more akin to "telling us to measure how much you caught," however.

In general, aside from performance and accountability measures currently required under distinct programs, local efforts in this area are in their infancy. This is not surprising, considering that the statewide One-Stop/*CareerNet* system has only recently become operational in several sites, including the facility in Columbia. Thus, local respondents echoed state-level respondents in their contention that it was too soon to delve into complicated performance measurement issues in a system that is just beginning, when practical operational matters as pressing as minimizing system downtime require immediate attention. In addition, in keeping with a statewide system that was developed centrally, local respondents are waiting for further state action in this area.

As described below, however, performance-related activities to further One-Stop progress and continuous improvement efforts are taking place. Although these activities are intended to support local efforts, they are also intended to inform statewide efforts in general. These include *CareerNet* performance reports, efforts to measure customer utilization, as well as some efforts to measure customer satisfaction.

CareerNet performance reports are local reports compiled by Center staff that are transmitted weekly to the state. These reports include specific data on the *CareerNet* system, including downtime, areas of difficulty, and related information. This current procedure is intended to support the state's efforts to continuously improve upon a system still being developed. The Center is also compiling *CareerNet* utilization numbers using customer "rating cards." Although there are plans for an on-line rating system, the current system employs the use of manual rating cards that each customer is expected to complete; these are periodically transmitted to the state. Therefore, this is a means to gather information on usage, as well as general information on how customers felt about using the system.

There are also some local efforts to measure customer satisfaction using surveys. However, these efforts are program- and activity-specific. There are currently no "Center" surveys or similar efforts to measure customers' overall experience. Key local respondents at the Center believed it would be difficult and misleading to use "Center" surveys because hardware and software difficulties are presently a consistent part of daily operations. It is believed that this factor would negatively skew any "Center" survey results. Indeed, respondents believed this also mitigated against the possibility of using current performance for benchmarking purposes.

Physical Facilities

The integrated Center occupies one of four units located in a strip mall. From left to right, there is a space leased by JTPA that partners refer to as the "End Unit." To its right is a convenience store, followed by the actual Center itself, and a restaurant is located on the far right of the mall. Thus, the two co-located partners—JTPA and ES/UI—lease two of the spaces in the strip mall, which are separated by a convenience store.

Current facilities are clearly the product of years of changes and negotiations. The local Job Service moved to what is now the Center "proper" in 1992. In 1994, JTPA staff moved into the End Unit. When the space adjacent to the Job Service facility became available in early 1995, JTPA staff relocated there without relinquishing the lease for the End Unit. Both partners agree that the best-case scenario would be occupying the entire strip mall, although this is probably unlikely. (JTPA also has the first option to lease the space now occupied by the restaurant, should the owners decide not to renew.)

The *End Unit* is the smallest portion of the strip mall and is currently used for a variety of classes and workshops. It conveniently has its own entrance so that classes can be held in the evening without disruption to the Center's office space. Howard County Community College, for instance, uses the space for ABE and GED classes two nights per week; Careerscope also uses this space for job search and related workshops. The End Unit also contains a bank of computer terminals used during classes and cubicle-style office space for staff from "visiting" entities. Presently, Careerscope staff use this space because of their frequency at the Center. Local respondents also envision this space being used by staff outsourced from other agencies (e.g., DSS, DORS).

The *Center* itself is the largest part of the strip mall. There is one entrance for individuals that opens into a reception area staffed by both a JTPA employee and a Job Service employee. A key feature of the Center is the "Resource Area," originally developed using ES Revitalization funds. This area contains two telephones for participant usage (with plans for a fax machine), 6 *CareerNet* terminals that deliver the automated core service package, and 10 separate computer terminals that can be used by individual customers to prepare resumes or fulfill other word processing needs. There is also a variety of printed labor market information, including publications, journals, magazines, newspapers, current books, and similar reference tools. "Resource Area Specialists" are located near the Resource Area to readily assist customers.

The Center also contains a large open area with desks in which individuals can fill out forms or simply sit and read the newspaper, an ALEX/Self-Registration area containing a bank of 8 terminals, and a small nearby area for Job Service orientations, which are delivered through video presentation every half hour. There is also one large classroom used for meetings and workshops that can be subdivided into two rooms using a sliding wall. However, respondents mentioned "competing" for use of this limited space. Around the perimeter of the facility are staff offices, which are attractive and use modular furniture. Staff offices for JTPA employment counselors are somewhat different, however, with much higher walls to afford a greater level of privacy.

The reengineering of existing space to accommodate partners' needs in a One-Stop environment has been challenging. Rather than work "from the ground up" to create a facility, state and local One-Stop actors worked with what they had. Although perhaps lower in cost, this strategy necessitates a response to seemingly mundane but frustrating and formidable tasks, such as arranging an attractive and customer-responsive facility around existing water pipes. In addition, because JTPA staff relocated to the present facility subsequent to ES/UI staff, JTPA staff are located "on the right side" of the facility, and ES/UI staff are located "on the left side" of the facility, fostering a sense of "separateness" that individual customers in a focus group clearly recognized. However, despite the challenges and difficulties that have arisen with respect to relocating agency personnel and altering physical facilities, it is clear that staff and other respondents are thoroughly proud of the Center. Staff expressed that "We brainstormed this place!.... This was *our* idea."

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

Partner entities not co-located at the Columbia site generally relate to the One-Stop initiative through a key staffperson who serves as a liaison and conduit of information. For example, in the case of the Howard County Community College, a Director in the Office of Continuing Education is the primary One-Stop liaison. In the case of the local Department of Social Services, the Assistant Director is the primary liaison. Although this arrangement is currently satisfactory, in order for the One-Stop/*CareerNet* initiative and the cultural change it represents to be "institutionalized," it is likely that additional staff from partner entities will need to be more directly involved in the future. The establishment of formal communication and coordination mechanisms will probably assist in this regard.

As previously indicated, staffing arrangements at the Center itself are such that ES/UI (state) employees are on one "side" of the facility, and JTPA (county) employees are on the other "side." Although not intentional, staff perform different functions so that a "functional integration" type of staffing arrangement—in which staff are situated based on function and not agency affiliation—would not eliminate the separation. Indeed, *because* staff performed clearly different functions, the differences in the personnel policies of the two partners (e.g., county employees have more holidays) was not perceived as problematic. Staff agreed, however, that if they were to become more "generalists" and involved in similar functions, different personnel policies might become an issue.

In the year since staff have been co-located at the present facility, attitudes have changed, fears have been assuaged, and the "we" and "they" perception has dissipated. Initially, there was an understandable degree of trepidation among both partners when JTPA staff first co-located there. The fact that staff already knew each other was helpful, as were initial joint meetings that involved all staff. Care was also taken to make JTPA staff feel "at home." For instance, it was perceived as important for JTPA staff to have their own door to the facility, as well as higher cubicle walls to afford a greater level of privacy during counseling sessions. There was also a high level of staff involvement in daily planning and operations. And, for their "first Christmas together," staff from both partner entities adopted a Howard County family. These many instances of "making the effort" were perceived by staff as crucial. Presently, it is clear that there is a strong sense of ownership and pride where the Center is concerned and an unequivocal belief among staff that One-Stop is the wave of the future.

Capacity Building

In general, capacity building efforts supportive of the local One-Stop initiative are understood in the context of the state's training institute, the Maryland Institute for Employment & Training Professionals (MIETP), which is conveniently located less than two miles from the Center. Because MIETP provides a variety of workshops—both in general areas and areas specifically related to the statewide One-Stop initiative—local actors have not felt the need to devote time and resources to develop internal training at this time. Staff from the Center can readily access MIETP's workshops. Indeed, curricula related to the statewide One-Stop/*CareerNet* initiative were developed, in part, based upon the experience of the Center as a pilot site. Although it appears that ES/UI and JTPA staff have been directly involved in organized capacity building efforts, staff from other partner entities have not.

Additional capacity building efforts that involve the two co-located partners include joint staff meetings that appear to have engendered a strong sense of involvement and commitment among staff (although formalized meetings have been discontinued due to other priorities); internal training on the "front desk" and the responsibilities of the two receptionists; as well as training on the Center's "Resource Area." It is clear that key respondents from the two partners value capacity building and training for all levels of staff. However, the newness of the One-Stop/*CareerNet* initiative in addition to other pressing priorities have had all levels of staff otherwise occupied. As a result, local desires (including retreats and the like) have necessarily taken a back seat at the present time.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

There are currently no locally-designed or initiated MIS projects, although there are extensive plans in various developmental stages at the state level. These include, for instance, automated/integrated intake and the establishment of an comprehensive participant tracking system. Local respondents were clearly supportive of statewide efforts and enthusiastic about future prospects. It is possible that the Center's status as a One-Stop pilot site—which affords local actors access to information in addition to a high level of involvement—accounts, at least in part, for the high degree of satisfaction and support.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

Notwithstanding the Center's "Resource Area," which contains a variety of materials in print and electronic format initially developed as part of the ES Revitalization initiative, efforts in this area are clearly driven by the state's One-Stop efforts. One-Stop/*CareerNet* is an expansive state-developed system that delivers a core set of services using computer technology. The delivery of high-quality labor market and related information is at its essence. This includes career exploration information (e.g., through the state's Career Information Delivery system, called *Career Visions*), self-assessment and skill inventory software, information on training and educational programs, and more. Furthermore, despite system downtime, "bugs," and related frustration, all levels of local staff (in addition to Center customers) were quite impressed with the system's current and planned capabilities.

Marketing

Local efforts in this area are in various stages of conceptualization. Few specific activities or projects have been undertaken, however. Considering the relative newness of the facility as a state-recognized One-Stop/*CareerNet* Center, this is not surprising.

Indeed, although all levels of staff wanted to "show the world" what had been accomplished to date, there was also recognition that marketing a system still being refined was premature. As remarked by one key local respondent, "We're comfortable with waiting right now. We want the system to be almost foolproof, although we recognize it won't be perfect." These perceptions are similar to those echoed by state-level respondents.

Local One-Stop actors expect the state to establish a system-wide marketing campaign at a more timely juncture in statewide One-Stop implementation. Respondents were comfortable with supplementing statewide efforts with locally-initiated efforts. Plans include newspaper and local cable station advertising, in addition to a media-covered grand opening event. Although local players are anxious, the marketing that takes place as a result of partners' normal business operations is perceived as reasonably satisfactory at this time. For example, the Business Resource Center conducts its own marketing that incorporates the Center's resources and identifies access to skilled labor as benefits for employers. Similarly, the local PIC has a marketing committee for the JTPA program in the Mid-Maryland SDA, which has also been helpful.

The most significant challenge in this area is currently the lack of signage for the Center. Thus, although the need to postpone broader marketing efforts is acknowledged, local respondents expressed frustration regarding the lack of signage. Whereas state plans include large plexiglass signage with the *CareerNet* logo, it had not been received at the time of the site visit. Current signage relates to the local Job Service, which was located at the site initially. At present, there is nothing to identify the JTPA entity's presence at the Center. The only identifier signifying the Center as a site for various workforce development needs is the state-developed "*CareerNet* logo," a "sticker" that is affixed to the glass window in the front of the building. However, it is unlikely that customers are as yet familiar with this statewide logo. Indeed, individual customers participating in a focus group discussion specifically cited the lack of signage as unsettling. Employees of the Center concurred. Finally, there is still discussion regarding a *name* for the Center. Although this Profile references the "Columbia Employment & Training Center," that identification is for the purposes of convenience only.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

The Columbia site offers a range of on-site services to individual customers, generally those customers who are job ready and seeking employment. The Center itself is devoted almost exclusively to job search using predominantly a "self-directed computer-based approach" that has been developed at the state level. Indeed, the local design is predicated upon individuals conducting their own job search at their own pace, with staff assistance as needed. The majority of individuals visit the Center to file for unemployment insurance benefits. Typical customer flow then includes a video-based Job Service orientation, meeting with Job Service staff, registering on-line with "ALEX" and, if in need of training, customers are "handed off" to JTPA staff for eligibility determination, assessment, and service planning.

Because the One-Stop/*CareerNet* system in Maryland is state-developed and directed, services to individual customers are best understood within the context of the state's conceptual framework and One-Stop design. The state of Maryland envisions four levels of service: (1) *The Career Information Service Level*, which involves remote access to high-quality labor market and career information; (2) *The Core Service Level*, which is the heart of the *CareerNet* system, as described below; (3) *The Integrated Intake Level*, which is currently the least developed; and (4) *The Enhanced Service Level*, which is expected to vary across the state but which, at a minimum, includes computer tutorials, ABE packages, and similar software.

The "Core Service Level" is available to all customers regardless of program eligibility. It represents a combination of on-line customer services described in terms of four "clusters" that are in a continuous state of evolution and refinement. In addition, staff dedicated to assisting customers in accessing on-line information and services are present at all times.

- *The Automated Personal Access Cluster* involves a single automated record for each customer so that individuals using the *CareerNet* system need only input basic information once.
- *The Job Finding Cluster* currently includes several levels of on-line services to enable individuals to look for and secure a job. It includes ALEX, Job Search Assistance through computer-assisted learning, and other labor exchange services (which are expanded with local workshops as described below).

- *The Career Exploration Cluster* currently includes information on careers, demands and qualifications, occupations suited to individual skills, interests, abilities, etc. There is also a user-friendly automated self-assessment component and a computerized skill inventory feature to enable individual customers to plan appropriate career, employment, and learning plans. *CareerNet Visions*, the state's Career Information Delivery System, is also a component of this cluster.
- *The Customer Development Cluster* enables individuals to obtain and print out information on education and training opportunities in the state and local area, as well as financial and other support (e.g., PELL and loan programs). Information on certain eligibility requirements, costs, and graduate earnings is also included.

Local areas are encouraged to expand upon the Core Service Level by, for instance, offering workshops as part of the "Enhanced Service Level." Indeed, this is the primary way in which the Columbia site has expanded upon the state's minimum required services. There are presently a variety of locally-designed on-site workshops that are offered by different partner entities. For instance, Careerscope provides a broad range of job search-related workshops generally for JTPA participants (typically Title III-eligible dislocated workers). If slots are available, ES/UI participants can also attend. Customized workshops include: "Personal Empowerment," "Researching the Job Market," "Coping with Job Loss," "Networking," and "Advanced Interviewing." Careerscope staff also facilitate a "Job Club" at the Center, which is called the "Employment Circle."

Job Service staff also conduct "Early Intervention Workshops" as part of local UI Profiling efforts. (Although this workshop is required of UI profilees, it is open to all Center customers.) In addition, the Business Resource Center offers on-site workshops for individuals interested in starting their own business (e.g., franchising) and, as stated earlier, the Howard County Community College offers evening classes at the Center and is the primary vendor of classroom training services.

Services for Employer Customers

Consistent with the state's One-Stop design, core services for employers are expected to be delivered chiefly through automation and the use of sophisticated computer technology through the "Employer Cluster" portion of the "Core Service Level." However, employer services are a second-year priority for the state. Plans include remote access to a broad range of labor market information to be phased in based upon employer priorities ascertained through statewide employer surveys, including employer access to suppressed applicant files, legislative and regulatory information (e.g., pertaining to WARN or ADA), and a statewide "calendars of events."

In addition to on-line information and services that are planned, the local One-Stop system currently offers a range of recruitment and outplacement services that can be accessed through any of the four primary partner entities, as well as more intensive services available through the Howard County Community College and the Business Resource Center of the local Economic Development Authority. Both partners offer a range of employer services, including business planning, business counseling, employer seminars, customized training, and relocation information and assistance. Although partners endeavor to coordinate employer referrals, a single integrated system of employer contacts (e.g., using a single account representative system) has not yet been developed.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

A focus group discussion was held with individuals participating in the Center's Job Club, which is called "The Employment Circle." Individuals were predominantly JTPA Title III participants who were generally well-experienced and highly educated. Overall, participants thought that the services and the service delivery framework represented a significant and positive departure from "traditional" services and service delivery—a "good investment of taxpayer dollars."

Participants' general view of the Center was captured by one middle-aged gentleman who was the former Vice President of Human Resources for a medium-sized company that recently moved out of state. In his former position, he was thoroughly acquainted with outplacement services and agencies. However, costs were typically high, and the services only short-term. His perception that, "This is the mirror image of an outplacement program that *continues*" was strongly reiterated by others in the focus group.

Individuals specifically noted many benefits that the Center offered. For example, several participants discussed the importance of having case managers, who are called "counselors." (Once considered eligible for Title III, each individual is assigned a counselor who works one-on-one with a customer based on a "50-minute hour.") It was believed that having "someone you can talk to" was generally important, but was absolutely crucial for those individuals laid off after several years of "secure" and well-paying employment.

Other stated benefits included access to a variety of training programs ("I was pleasantly surprised when I looked at the types of training skills that are offered."); access to the latest on-line job search technologies, such as job search via the Internet, as well as other technologies ("These guys are really where they need to be!" And, from another participant, "They're ahead of the curve based on what I've seen."); having a variety of resources in one location ("I don't have to go to four different offices and deal with the job search and the training and the UI. It's boom. It's right here."); facilities that were attractive and more professional than "traditional" government offices ("The facilities here are much nicer. In [other areas] you felt like you took your life into your hands."); greater awareness of area resources ("I'm aware more of things in the community. I heard about the Business Womens' Network and joined that."); and "practical" workshops and information that included the Employment Circle ("This is a great service because, in the past, when I've attended career types of things...I don't think a lot of the classes had a realistic approach to them. It was a lot of theory.")

Although participants had a lot of praise for the "new system," there were criticisms as well. For example, several disapproving comments pertained to the Center's lack of clear signage. One individual stated, for instance, "It says something to you when there's no clear signage." Another mentioned that, "You have to think of this more like a retail operation and you're providing a product."

An additional area that drew criticism was related to negative first impressions based upon what was perceived to be disorganized entry procedures and confusion over the services individuals could use. Several participants remarked that they "couldn't get a straight answer unless [they] registered [with the Job Service]," although the *CareerNet* system is intended to be accessible by anyone. Participants were under the impression that they "had to" go through the Job Service in order to receive any Center services. One individual added that, "Everyone here is under the assumption that if you need one side, you need the other. I needed the training side, but I don't need the employment side." (It was interesting that focus group participants clearly detected two distinct "sides" of the building, noting clear "cultural differences" between ES/UI and JTPA staff that extended beyond what participants referred to as obvious "county culture" and "state culture.")

Finally, it was not surprising that individuals perceived the slowness and downtime of the *CareerNet* system to be frustrating. This particular complaint, however, appeared to be taken more in stride. Participants appeared to demonstrate a level of "understanding" regarding the new system that did not extend to other areas.

Generally, participants believed that most of their less-than-positive experiences had to do with the "newness" of the Center—the arrangement itself, as well as the technology. They clearly believed that "things are improving," and were supportive of what the local area was attempting to do, noting that it was "still better than [the] government services" with which they were familiar. Indeed, participants had a variety of feasible suggestions for the Center, including rotating receptionist staff and having a Center "greeter." All in all, participants certainly saw a bright future for the Center and believed it was worthwhile for them and for the community.

Employers

As mentioned earlier, employer services delivered through the newly operational One-Stop/*CareerNet* system are a focus for the second year of the implementation period. Therefore, the One-Stop site visit did not incorporate employer focus groups or similar modalities of inquiry. However, separate discussions with the current Chair and Vice-Chair of the PIC, representatives of two area employers, offered both insight and perspective. Comments on the current and planned One-Stop/*CareerNet* system were overwhelmingly positive. In particular, the importance the state clearly placed on employer input was perceived as paramount in designing a state-of-the-art technological system intended to support the employer community. What has been accomplished thus far was perceived as "a great beginning."

Each representative believed "getting the right kinds of people" were primary concerns of employers. The Center (and others like it) was perceived as a necessary response to a system perceived as less than adequate. "One-Stop" is clearly what the future holds, including the emphasis on technology. The One-Stop/*CareerNet* system will allow individuals to enter personal/professional data into a system that can be accessed from an employer's office. "Already one step is eliminated. It will save time, which means money." Both employer representatives noted the importance of "seamless" employer services and service delivery and that "having everyone here makes it better.... It's speed, it's accuracy, and it's streamlining." It was believed that the Center's arrangement appealed to the "bottom line" of businesses, particularly in the case of recent downsizings and the need for outplacement services.

Although the technology was perceived as particularly impressive, and although both representatives believed that the focus on technology and electronic access was necessary and prudent, it was also emphatically voiced that that should not be misinterpreted as "human touch" is unnecessary. Indeed, it was believed that human interaction was crucial. One representative, who is the Senior Vice President of a local bank, stated, for instance, "We have on-line services at our bank, but we've *yet* to get a loan on-line. People will do *everything* on-line but not a loan. Technology is there, but they won't use it." In other words, with respect to some needs in particular, people want "touch and feel." Neither individual saw the current or planned system conflicting with this in any way.

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN

In addition to the key factors mentioned earlier in this Profile—local demographics, status of the Center as a One-Stop pilot, and a rapidly changing political and organizational landscape—there are additional factors that have impacted One-Stop design and implementation in Howard County. ES Revitalization has been a distinct influence on local One-Stop design, as intimated earlier. This federal-level initiative is, in fact, the precursor for both state efforts and local efforts in Columbia, establishing a baseline for future reengineering efforts that were later supported by the One-Stop grant. The state's well-articulated vision, with its emphasis on technology and clear parameters established for local areas, has been an additional influence on local One-Stop design and implementation. Local respondents from various entities believed the state's vision and efforts to be both ambitious and praiseworthy, noting that *clarity of purpose* facilitated local efforts.

Relationships among partner entities has also impacted local efforts and progress in positive ways. The strong history between specific partner agencies such as the community college and the JTPA entity have facilitated local efforts and increased coordination, despite the lack of formalized coordination mechanisms. Moreover, the addition of an economic development component to the local One-Stop initiative has incorporated the business perspective and is likely to support future implementation and progress. The inclusion of the local Department of Social Services as a coordinating partner is also meaningful. Although perhaps not a significant local influence at this time, it is likely that this inclusion and the positive relationship with the local DSS will decidedly impact local efforts when the state entity responsible for the JOBS program takes back full reins of the program later this year, and as welfare reform becomes a legislative reality.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The site in Columbia has made forward strides in creating a One-Stop Center and network in a relatively short period of time that offers responsive and comprehensive services clearly targeted to the demographics of the local population. It is particularly well-suited to providing job search and related services and activities for individuals who are job-ready. The Center itself is clearly part of a local network that is supported by historical relationships and referral arrangements with a broad range of partners and entities.

The local One-Stop system exemplifies aspects of different One-Stop delivery models. For users of the automated *CareerNet* information system, the Center represents fully integrated One-Stop core services. For users of enhanced services available from ES, UI, JTPA and JOBS, the local system exemplifies coordinated services among co-located partners. For local partners not physically co-located at the *CareerNet* Center (i.e., the community college and Business Resource Center), the Center exemplifies a no-wrong-door approach, with articulated referral arrangements and coordinated local planning. As these partners begin to support electronic linkages to the *CareerNet* information network, they will become more active partners in the delivery of One-Stop services.

Because the site had been operational for less than five months at the time of the site visit, many activities and processes were still in various stages of development or conceptualization. As various respondents stated, "We're just beginning." Thus, the local system is clearly in a normative stage of development with much happening, seemingly all at once. What can be said at this time is that it is uncertain to what extent the tenuous nature of the JTPA leasing arrangement will impact further plans and progress, or to what extent the potentially destabilizing effect of numerous changes taking place will have on emerging efforts. Moreover, although it was reiterated that "individual players are key," the reliance on specific individuals may be more of a short-term facilitator than a long-term solution. Although the establishment of a system through cultural change efforts is surely strengthened by strong relationships among individuals, there will be a growing need to institutionalize the cultural change that is intended across agencies and partners. Despite the current state of flux, it is likely that the experiences in Howard County will offer both insight and lessons for the emerging national One-Stop system.

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APPENDIX M

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During September 1996

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS
One-Stop Profile

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STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The state of Massachusetts began laying the groundwork for One Stop implementation in the late 1980s. Fueled by widespread recognition that public employment and training programs were not meeting adequately the needs of job seekers or employers, the state embarked upon a long-term and fundamental transformation of its services and statewide delivery systems. In 1988, Massachusetts became one of the first states in the country to establish a new state-level advisory council—the MassJobs Council (referred to in this profile as MJC or "the Council")—to oversee its emerging workforce development system. The MassJobs Council built upon public-private partnerships established by its predecessor, the State Job Training Coordinating Council, in its efforts to involve a wide range of service providers, educators, union representatives, government officials, and private sectors employers in the task of "reinventing" the public employment and training system.[1] The MassJobs Council and the Career Center Office—MJC's staff-level implementation arm—have been charged with responsibility for overseeing and managing the statewide One-Stop initiative.

The motto for the workforce development system advocated by the MassJobs Council is "centrally guided, locally driven." Thus, under the new system, most of the important decisions about who will provide services and how they will be provided will be made by regional entities. At the same time the MassJobs Council was created, the state legislature established a framework for local governance of its restructured workforce development system by redefining the mandate of the state's sixteen Private Industry Councils and renaming them Regional Employment Boards or REBs. By November 1995, when the state was awarded a One-Stop Implementation Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor,[2] Massachusetts perceived itself to be prepared for a massive reorganization of the state's employment and training delivery system.

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[1] "Reinventing Government" has been a key theme in the state's efforts to transform its employment and training system. This stems both from the popularity of the book by the same title, and the direct involvement of one of its authors, David Osborne, in the development and implementation of Massachusetts' competitive model.

Like a number of other One-Stop implementation states, Massachusetts is attempting to coordinate the design and delivery of all of the education, training, human resource, and career transition services available to Massachusetts' residents. What is unique to Massachusetts, however, is its commitment to establishing a new system shaped by competitive forces and driven by customer demand. Rooted in the belief that market forces are the best means of assuring quality, the "competitive model" adopted by Massachusetts is perceived by observers both inside and outside government as a radically new process for the design and delivery of publicly-funded services.

Massachusetts is the first One Stop implementation state to embrace a fully "competitive model" in its efforts to restructure employment and training services. The MassJobs Council's vision includes competition at three levels. First, Regional Employment Boards were required to compete for One-Stop funds by submitting proposals to implement One-Stop Career Center systems in their respective regions. The incentive structure was such that the REBs selected for early implementation would receive the bulk of federal implementation grant funds and would inform the implementation process in all other regions. First-year implementation grant funds were set aside for the development of One-Stop career centers in four regions.[3]

Second, public agencies, private firms, community-based organizations, and consortia were eligible to compete for selection as career center operators. Public agencies were not designated as "presumptive" service providers under the transformed career center system, nor were they given priority in the selection process. Instead selection criteria emphasized the development of innovative high-quality service designs and the delivery of seamless services responsive to employer and job seeker customer needs.

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[2] This included $10.5 million in Implementation Grant funds, and another $1.1 million in an LMI Information Technology grant.

[3] At the time of the evaluation site visit, the two REBs designated for early implementation had issued their RFPs and selected operators for four career centers. One of the four regions selected by the state in its first-round REB competition ultimately withdrew from the implementation process due to the eruption of a local political firestorm after it selected a non-governmental organization as a career center operator. Implementation of career centers has proceeded in the remaining three regions.

Third, the state required the selection of at least two distinct career center operators within each region. These operators would compete with each other (as well as with other private enterprises) for individual and business customers. It was believed that competition among center operators would lead to innovation, diversification, and specialization among centers which would increase customer choice and enhance service quality overall.

Massachusetts' plan for transforming workforce development systems is widely perceived as an experiment with the potential to inform other efforts at transforming the delivery of government services at both the state and federal levels. Among the questions raised by the Massachusetts approach are the following:[4]

- Can career centers serve everyone or do competitive forces and limited resources inevitably lead to limitations on service availability, particularly for "hard-to-serve" customers in need of intensive services?
- Are career center operators truly free to run their centers like businesses or will government requirements and "red tape" restrain entrepreneurial activity? Is it possible to simultaneously serve the public good and encourage an entrepreneurial approach?
- Does a demand-driven model improve service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer outcomes?
- Is this approach applicable in other states?

A number of key variables have influenced One-Stop implementation in the state of Massachusetts. These include (1) controversy stemming from the introduction of a competitive process to select the entities to deliver federal and state-level public sector employment and training programs including public Employment Services (ES) and Unemployment Insurance (UI); (2) the initiation of parallel state and federal reforms in related government programs, including school-to-work and welfare reform initiatives; and (3) recent and rapid growth in the state's economy. Each of these factors is discussed briefly below:

- *The use of a competitive process to choose service providers for public-sector education, employment and training, and welfare programs has caused tension between existing state-level agencies and entities*

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[4] These questions have been adapted from a document produced by the Center for Adult and Experiential Learning, one of the entities that has consulted with Massachusetts in the development of its One-Stop system.

formally or informally involved in the One-Stop initiative. Support for the Massachusetts "competitive model" varies considerably among partner agencies and departments. The fact that initiation of One-Stop career centers is associated with the dismantling of field offices of the Department of Employment and Training (which has been responsible for administering ES/UI services) has made it difficult for the MassJobs Council and the Career Center Office to establish good communication and coordination among key state-level stakeholders.

- *Parallel state and federal initiatives, including school-to-work and welfare reform, are increasingly perceived as linked to one another and to the One-Stop initiative.* Although such linkages have resulted in broad-based community support for workforce development, they have also subjected the One-Stop initiative to public scrutiny from a wide range of stakeholders inside and outside the professional employment and training community.
- *The recent rapid growth of the Massachusetts economy and the concomitant demand for effective vehicles for labor exchange have given momentum to the state's One-Stop initiative.* The state has recently emerged from a deep recession; statewide unemployment rates have dropped to just over 5%. However, the economy has experienced fundamental structural changes: there are fewer manufacturing and construction jobs and more employment opportunities in the service sector. Individuals are changing jobs more frequently and employers are demanding new skill sets. These changes have increased interest among job-seekers and employers in new approaches to workforce development services of the kind offered by career centers under the state's One-Stop initiative.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE ONE-STOP DESIGN

Key Features of the State One-Stop Vision

The state policymakers and consultants who were instrumental in developing the vision for Massachusetts' new workforce development delivery system called for the development of a statewide network of federally-supported career centers, which will serve as the primary brokers of education and workforce development services for businesses and individuals. The system is being built around four main principles:

- *Universal Access.* The system will be designed to serve all customers, including employers, job-changers, and job-seekers.
- *Competition.* Career centers will be selected through a competitive bidding process.

- *Customer Choice.* Each center will offer a menu of core services available to employers and individuals, and additional enhanced services for which the centers will charge fees.
- *Integration of Services and Oversight.* Flexible federal program requirements will be adopted and state and local governance structures developed to support seamless high-quality services and high-performance practices in the career centers.[5]

These system principles were nearly identical to those outlined in the Reemployment Act of 1994. Although this legislation was never passed, it provided a framework that guided the development of One-Stop designs in a number of states, including Massachusetts. When the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the availability of federal implementation grants to support the transformation of workforce development services in selected states, the four required federal themes included three —universality, customer choice, and integration—that were virtually identical to Massachusetts' principles. The fourth theme—accountability—was perceived to be consistent with, but more general than, Massachusetts' principle of competition.

Required Local Programs. In guiding the development of local Career Centers, the state required that a defined set of programs—rather than specific agency partners—be integrated into the service delivery system. Required programs to which career centers must offer access include:

- Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser);
- Veterans' Employment Services;
- Dislocated Worker Services (JTPA Title III);
- Summer Youth Employment Services (JTPA Title IIB);
- Older Workers Services (Title V of the Older Americans' Act);
- Unemployment Insurance;[6]
- JOBS and other training programs for welfare customers;

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[5] The planners of the Massachusetts One-Stop system were eager for the introduction of federal workforce development block grants to eliminate categorical program requirements, including restrictions on the use of program-based funds and requirements for program-based reporting. The failure of the U.S. Congress to pass block grant legislation has forced state-level planners to search for regulatory compromises to facilitate the delivery of seamless services through its One-Stop career centers.

[6] Unemployment Insurance (UI) enrollment has since been converted to a phone-driven system.

- Adult Basic Education;
- Community-college based education and training;
- Vocational Education programs (Carl Perkins Act funds); and
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Services.

Interdepartmental Service Agreements negotiated between the MassJobs Council and the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training also committed career centers to providing Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker services, Trade Adjustment Assistance and Trade Readjustment Allowances to eligible dislocated workers. Conspicuously missing from the list of programs required for inclusion in the One-Stop system during the first implementation year were the JTPA Title IIA/C programs for economically disadvantaged youth and adults. Although in principle, state partners agreed that JTPA services to economically disadvantaged individuals should be part of the services available through One-Stop career centers, the two-year contract cycle in use for the provision of JTPA services precluded their immediate inclusion in an integrated resource stream to support One-Stop center operations.

Consistent with the state's One-Stop vision, Regional Employment Boards have been granted substantial discretion in establishing a competitive process to select center operators, approving the core and enhanced services they deem most appropriate for their local area (as long as the state's required services are included), setting performance expectations for center operators, and overseeing the delivery of services within their regions. The state requires REBs to open the competition for selecting center operators to for-profit, non-profit, or public agencies, or coalitions of any of the above. Once selected and chartered for the delivery of services, local operators are responsible for delivering the core and enhanced services described in their charters. The MassJobs Council/Career Center Office in no way implies that the required programs are to be administered in the same way as they had been previously. In fact, the state encourages REBs to select bidders that offer innovative services.

Required Services. The MassJobs Council mandates the provision of the following core services to job-seekers, job-changers, and employers in each career center:

- *Core Services for Individuals* must include at a minimum basic assessment, job search assistance, local labor market information, access to job listings, and information on education and training programs and unemployment insurance.

- *Core Services for Employers* must include screening and referral of job applicants, on-line access to a job bank, and referral to sources of funds for worker training.

The MassJobs Council also requires the existence of non-core or "enhanced" services in each career center, but does not specify the content of these services. The content, delivery systems, and fee-structures are all to be determined locally.

The state has provided no requirements for the development of the physical facilities for One-Stop career centers. Rather, Regional Employment Boards were charged with evaluating the degree to which proposed facilities met the needs of the operators and the local communities they were intended to serve.

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals

Although the four federal themes are featured prominently in the state's vision for One-Stop implementation, the MassJobs Council and Career Center Office's commitment to supporting locally-driven systems and grassroots innovation means that the state has only limited control over how the themes are actually implemented. The state-level agencies defined the four federal themes, and then selected REBs and career centers based on their ability to realize these themes. The state's understanding of these themes and the ways in which the MassJobs Council and Career Center Office support them locally is described below.

Universal Access

Career Centers in the state of Massachusetts must provide all individual and employer customers access to free core services, and they must offer fee-based enhanced services representing more intensive screening, matching, and placement activities. As described previously the state requires that core services include basic assessment, job search assistance, access to labor market information, review of local job listings, access to information about local education and training programs, and unemployment insurance enrollment. The state has encouraged REBs to add to or expand upon these state-level requirements in issuing their requests for proposals to solicit bids from center operators. Potential operators are also encouraged to approach their proposals creatively.

Customer Choice

The state of Massachusetts seeks to support customer choice in its career centers by ensuring that customers have (1) a choice of career centers from which to receive services; and (2) a choice of services within each center.

The state-level One-Stop design insures that at least two career centers will operate in every region. This design encourages innovation at the local level by providing incentives for the centers to compete against one another, as well as with existing private providers of existing services, in the development of new products or services and for increased market shares.[7] Customers may access services at either or both career centers serving their region. The state and the Regional Employment Boards also encourage local career centers to differentiate themselves by developing different service approaches and establishing specialized market "niches." It is assumed that the career centers serving the same area will thereby develop enhanced capacities and expertise in different areas of service. This, too, is intended to enhance customer choice.

The state has also supported customer choice by encouraging diversity in the development and provision of technology-based products for customer use. On the one hand, the Career Center Office encourages center operators to develop and market their own new products. On the other hand, the state has invested heavily in the development of a statewide electronic interactive Job Bank that can be accessed through the state's World Wide Web site on the Internet. The electronic Job Bank must be accessible from all career centers. In addition, it can be accessed by customers from any remote site with Internet access via modem. When posting information about job openings on the state's automated Job Bank, employer customers have the choice of posting "open" job descriptions which identify the employer to interested job applicants or "closed" job descriptions which require career center staff to review applicant qualifications before referring an applicant to that employer.

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[7] Although the staff of the state Career Center Office and even the REBs describe the state's goal as encouraging competition between the operators of career centers serving the same area, the staff of "competing" centers in the local region visited as part of the evaluation emphasized that they have formed high-quality collaborative partnerships with each other. These staff have coined the word "Co-opitition" to describe the mix of cooperation and competition in these relationships.

Integrated Services

Key individuals and organizations involved in developing the One-Stop design in the state of Massachusetts felt that gradual integration of existing programs and services through the collaboration of existing provider agencies would not sufficiently transform the public employment and training system, and would risk losing customers to private sector service providers during the transition. "The only way to achieve *truly* integrated services," one respondent noted, "is to construct them that way from the beginning." Thus, the state of Massachusetts is building an entirely new system specifically designed to "consolidate all employment and training services into a seamless, well-coordinated, statewide network that is customer friendly and easy to use." All career centers must adhere to this mandate, but the state permits considerable latitude in the development of local service designs. Massachusetts' career center operators have organized their menus of services by function rather than by categorical program or funding stream.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Performance measurement is a particularly charged area for One-Stop system development in Massachusetts. Because career centers will replace existing field offices of the Division of Employment and Training (responsible for ES/UI),[8] Massachusetts is under tremendous pressure, both inside and outside of state government, to demonstrate that its new approach to workforce development is more successful than the former system. Under these circumstances, there is great interest in comparing the outcomes of the old system to outcomes of the new system. At the same time, the new workforce development system has different objectives than the old system. For example, centers are likely to be engaged in career education and school-to-work initiatives for youth still attending school. These efforts are likely to result in outcomes that are not comparable to outcomes generated from the previous system. Negotiating measures that are both useful to the new system and allow for comparisons to the performance of the old system poses a formidable challenge.

State and local staff have developed issue papers on how performance measures can be used to hold Regional Employment Boards, local career centers, and the state system as a whole accountable for achieving desired outcomes. The state is particularly interested in measuring the performance of its career centers in the four areas of (1) customer satisfaction, (2) customer outcomes, (3) market growth and penetration, and (4) gross product.

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[8] The state has made a commitment to place all public employees dislocated as a result of this shift into new public-sector positions. These employees are also encouraged to apply for positions with the career centers that will serve their local areas after the ES/UI offices operated by the Division of Employment and Training are closed.

Customer Satisfaction. The state seeks to support career centers in achieving 90% customer satisfaction rates within 100 days of opening their doors. Career centers are encouraged to use a variety of tools to measure their performances in this area, including surveys, focus groups, and service quality information systems. Regional Employment Boards are responsible for ensuring that customer satisfaction data are collected. They are permitted some latitude in developing methods for collecting such data within the career centers.

Customer Outcomes. The state seeks to support the career centers in ensuring that traditional customers of public workforce development programs continue to have full access to all core services and that the centers serve a population that is representative of the service areas covered by the centers. The Regional Employment Boards are charged with enforcing high achievement in this area. Career centers are each expected to achieve a 90% positive outcome rate (consistent with individual or employer customer service plans) for customers using center services.

Market Growth and Penetration for Employer Services. The state seeks to support the career centers in achieving increased participation of local employers in the workforce development system. Employer customer satisfaction is intended to be measured, and a 90% repeat customer rate achieved state-wide. Career centers are also encouraged to recruit a range of types and sizes of private-sector employer customers. Again, REBs are charged with supporting the development of local employer markets for workforce development services.

Gross Product. The state seeks to support each of the career centers in serving an average of 5,500 individuals and 300 to 500 employer customers annually. Career centers are also expected to develop a job bank of 10,000 openings (measured cumulatively over the year) by the completion of their first fiscal year. The state's investment in electronic service delivery mechanisms is intended to support achievement of these outcomes.

State-level staff indicated that the implementation of these more comprehensive and customer-oriented performance standards was among the long-term objectives of the new system. They anticipate, however, that more traditional interim standards will be utilized in the short-term.

At the time of the site-visit, the Career Center Office had just begun to develop performance standards for itself and the MassJobs Council, including easy-to-understand measures of how well it is supporting the career centers in achieving system-level outcomes. The three general areas that will be addressed by these state-level performance standards include (1) financial viability of the career centers, including state success in developing an integrated funding stream to support center operations; (2) success of the state in developing the management information technology needed to support the delivery of technology-based services and program administrative functions; and (3) the integrity of operations of the career centers in both financial and programmatic terms.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

State Governance Structure. Two different entities share responsibility for planning, guiding, and overseeing the One-Stop system in Massachusetts: (1) the MassJobs Council and its Career Center Office, and (2) the Regional Employment Boards.

The MassJobs Council was created in 1988 to replace the State Job Training Coordinating Council required under the Job Training Partnership Act. The Council's 33 members include appointed and elected public officials, profit and non-profit service providers and community-based organizations, union representatives, consultants, and private sector employers. The new Council, although comprising many of the same stakeholders as the State Job Training Coordinating Council,[9] was given a much broader mandate, including responsibility for coordinating all job-related education, employment, and training programs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Council concentrated its early activities in the following four areas:

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[9] Federal JTPA legislation mandates that State Job Training Coordinating Councils (STJCCs) secure participation by representatives of private sector employers, state agencies, the state legislature, organized labor, and community-based organizations. The MassJobs Council includes representatives from each of these areas, as well as from educational institutions and local governments.

- *Linking workforce development to economic development.* Early on, the Council perceived that an effective publicly supported labor exchange could serve as a valuable tool for economic development, and focused on developing regionally-oriented collaborative ventures between government and private industry designed to sustain economic viability and develop opportunities for economic growth.
- *Mobilizing broad-based private-sector involvement.* Because the Council was laying the foundation for a new system that would serve the interests of employer customers as well as individuals, Council members felt that it was crucial to secure private-sector input in designing and implementing the Council's statewide initiative.
- *Coordinating state-level agencies and departments.* The Council facilitated dialogue and strategic planning efforts between all state departments and agencies with oversight responsibility for state or federal employment and training programs. The Council also recruited new stakeholders not traditionally part of the employment and training network—such as welfare agencies and educational organizations—to participate in the dialogue.
- *Serving as a state-level policy broker.* The Council convened numerous forums on specific workforce-related initiatives such as school-to-work, education reform, and welfare reform, in an effort to inform comprehensive and impartial state-level strategic planning.

As part of its early One-Stop planning functions, the MassJobs Council also coordinated the activities of seven interagency work groups that were established to support One-Stop planning in the areas of (1) governance, (2) integrated funding, (3) quality assurance, (4) performance standards, (5) labor market information/MIS, (6) customer services, and (7) capacity building. The Council also convened a Commissioner's Policy Group, which comprised key policymakers from the planned state agency partners. Individual administrators were tasked with identifying sources of funds within their agencies and departments that could support career center services and discussing what roles their agencies would play under the new system.

Because the MassJobs Council is not a state agency or department, One-Stop planners anticipated that it would be viewed as an impartial entity without a special interest to protect in the transformation from the previous public agency-based delivery system to a new competitive system. However, over time, the MassJobs Council has taken on a greater and greater role in overseeing the implementation of the new career center system. This increased operational role was supported by an executive order by the governor in December 1993 declaring the Council an official Human Resources

Investment Council (HRIC) with statutory authority to oversee statewide workforce development programs.

Under its new role, the MassJobs Council is no longer viewed as an impartial entity, but rather as the primary agency most closely identified with the One-Stop initiative and responsible for coordinating and overseeing the statewide system transformation. The importance of its new role was highlighted by the designation of the state's Lieutenant Governor as the Council head. The Council continues to recruit and coordinate state-level agency participation and input in the career center initiative and facilitate the development of state policy to guide locally-administered career centers. However, as its One-Stop administrative responsibilities have grown, its relationships with other state agencies—some of which are being downsized and de-emphasized as a result of the One-Stop initiative—have become more complicated.

The Career Center Office is the staff-level unit created by the MassJobs Council in early 1995 to support the implementation of the statewide career center system. The Career Center Office works with the MassJobs Council to accomplish the following objectives:

- Defining the state-level standards for chartering individual career center operators.
- Establishing statewide quality assurance measures for the One-Stop career center system.
- Supporting the development of high-quality labor market information products.
- Marketing the One-Stop career center system on a statewide basis.
- Providing ongoing technical assistance to local REBs and career centers as needed.

Among the chief day-to-day responsibilities of the eight staff assigned to this office are the creation of an integrated funding stream to support the operation of local career centers, providing capacity building and technical assistance to Regional Employment Boards and career centers, as needed, and coordinating the development of the state-level technology-based systems to support local One-Stop operations. The staff in the Career Center Office are employees of the MassJobs Council and are not housed with or assigned to any other state agency.

State Agency Involvement. In other One-Stop implementation states, system transformation has occurred with the active involvement of a "lead" state-level agency or department (usually the agency responsible for ES and UI services) with participation from additional state and local partner agencies. In Massachusetts, however, the MassJobs Council—the state-level entity most closely associated with the One-Stop initiative—is not responsible for administering any programs. Because the state is committed to developing a network system of career centers that are "centrally guided and locally driven," the MassJobs Council felt that it was crucial to devolve significant responsibility and decision-making authority to local-level actors. Most of the key decisions about the design and delivery of workforce development services under the new system are being made by Regional Employment Boards and local career center operators, with feedback from the communities and customers served by career centers.

The key role of existing state-level agencies and departments vis a vis the career center system is as a source of funds to support career center operations. Through Interagency Service Agreements negotiated by the MassJobs Council and the Career Center Office, a number of state agencies have agreed to "redirect" substantial amounts of discretionary and categorical funds to the operation of seven chartered career centers in three of the four initial workforce development regions. In exchange for the redirection of these funds, the MassJobs Council has assured each agency that categorical funds will be expended in accordance with federal requirements and that categorical reporting requirements will be met.[10]

State agencies that committed FY 97 resources to support One-Stop operations include the following:

- The Department of Employment and Training (DET) has been responsible for administering the ES, UI, Veterans Employment programs, and Trade Adjustment Assistance/Trade Readjustment Allowance programs through a system of field offices. As One-Stop career centers open, DET field offices are closed. A total of $5.8 million in DET funding was committed to seven career centers through an Interagency Service Agreement for FY 97.

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[10] These assurances have been met with some degree of alarm by the designated career center operators, who anticipated providing integrated services with block grant funds that had few reporting or other "strings attached."

- The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is responsible for employment-related services to households receiving cash welfare payments. Through an Interagency Service Agreement with MassJobs Council, DTA committed up to $3.0 million in FY97 funds for career centers to provide job search assistance to welfare recipients. However performance requirements may prevent career centers from "earning" all the money in the agreement.
- The Industrial Services Program has been responsible for administering JTPA Title III services to dislocated workers and providing business assistance and incumbent work training to at-risk firms. This agency, which is in the process of being merged with the Bay State Skills Corporation,[11] committed $1.6 million in funds to support the delivery of core and enhanced services to individual and business customers at career centers. Funding will flow directly to designated Title III substate entities (the SDAs).
- The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission committed $540,000 to support the delivery of career center services to individuals with substantial physical or mental disabilities.
- The Department of Mental Health was considering a contribution of $250,000 to support career centers in providing employment-related services to individuals with mental illness histories.
- The Department of Education (DOE) signed an Interagency Service Agreement to provide $200,000 to career centers for the provision of adult basic education services.
- The Commission for the Blind committed $90,000 to support the delivery of career center services to blind customers.
- Because JTPA funds were committed to local service delivery areas through FY 97, JTPA Title II funds were made available through arrangements with local JTPA grantees. Only $55,000 in JTPA Title II funds were committed to support career center system operations in FY 97.

State Framework for Local Governance

The MassJobs Council was eager to create a structure for the local governance of the state's career center system for several reasons. First, the state's vision was that the service delivery system should be locally controlled. Thus, to be consistent, the Council decided to construct the system from the bottom up, rather than from the top down. Second, the MassJobs Council anticipated that state-level political turmoil might be minimized if local needs were able to drive state-level decisions, rather than the reverse. Thus, the Council prescribed a local process for One-Stop system design and implementation, but was not prescriptive in its approach to the organization of local workforce development systems or career centers.

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[11] The new umbrella organization will be called the Corporation for Business, Work and Learning (CBWL).

Regional Employment Boards (REBs) are responsible for local implementation of the One-Stop initiative based on policy guidelines set by the MassJobs Council. The REBs are charged with chartering career center operators and monitoring their performance, developing high-quality local partnerships to ensure that career centers are meeting the needs of the local communities, and working with the career centers to establish continuous quality improvement mechanisms.

As the first stage in building a statewide system, MassJobs Council decided to select four Regional Employment Boards for participation in first-year implementation of the career center initiative. Additional REBs could apply for planning status and receive smaller grant awards to plan for implementation the following year, or could postpone transition activities altogether. The REBs interested in competing for implementation or planning grants were asked to submit proposals describing their visions for local workforce development systems that would meet the needs of their local communities.

In March 1995, a review committee composed of MassJobs Council members and staff, public agency partners, and representatives from several organizations that were consultants to the state in the development of the One-Stop initiative selected two REBs—the Hampden County and Boston Regional Employment Boards—for immediate implementation of career centers. Two additional regions—Metro North and Berkshire County were also selected to receive first-year implementation grants once specific implementation issues were addressed.

Shortly thereafter, an "implementers' work group," which comprised key individuals representing the implementer REBs, the MassJobs Council, the Career Center Office, and partner agency staff was established to work on three important aspects of the selected regional career center initiatives. These included (1) finalizing career center designs that were consistent with state-level requirements and met local-level objectives; (2) developing a process for requests for proposals (RFPs) to select center operators; and (3) developing a plan for funding first-year center operations.[12] The group met weekly and developed protocols, procedures, and legal documents that would both meet the immediate needs of the first-round implementer REBs and support the career center initiative in the long term.

Consistent with state's vision of supporting local innovation, the procedures developed be the implementer's work group for selecting career center operators was quite flexible. MassJobs Council required only that the REBs' selection processes be consistent with their original proposals and that the REBs ensure that all public and private service providers or coalitions were permitted a fair chance to compete. The MassJobs Council accepted responsibility for developing an integrated funding stream that would enable program funds to be administered by any career center operator or coalition of partners selected by a Regional Employment Board.

The selection processes actually used by the four REBs the participated in first-year implementation funding varied considerably. In some regions, the entire REB was involved in the selection process, while in others a subcommittee was charged with this responsibility. Some REBs required bidders to present their proposals in person, others required only written proposals. Some REBs selected operators that proposed the strongest plans while others suggested that several applicants form partnerships and actively engaged in a negotiation process with prospective center operators. Since the REBs were expected to learn from their own first experiences and the experiences of other REBs in selecting center operators, they are permitted to modify their original selection process in the future.

In theory, once local career center operators are selected, the MassJobs Council will assume a much less active role in the oversight of the local system, while REBs will retain an active role in the ongoing governance of the local system. However, the full implementation of the One-Stop system on a statewide basis has been delayed, due to organized opposition from several quarters, including some state-level administrators and local-level state employee unions. The political controversy has slowed the process of opening career centers, prompted some REBs to abstain from a planned competitive

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[12] One-Stop planners had anticipated that federal block grants would already be in place by this time. When federal block grants failed to materialize, the MassJobs Council and the Career Center Office staff realized that they needed to develop a strategy that would permit the integration of funds to support local career center operations.

RFP process for the coming year, and raised questions about how to accomplish the introduction of competition to public-sector programs without engendering a political backlash.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Since the implementation of the One-Stop initiative in Massachusetts requires dismantling the pre-existing employment and training system, communication and coordination around the One-Stop initiative at all levels has been highly charged. In the planning stages of the state's efforts to transform its workforce development system, the MassJobs Council and its staff served as the primary coordinating link between the various stakeholders. Initially, MassJobs Council concentrated its efforts on developing partnerships among economic development entities, private-sector employers, and state agencies and departments with responsibility for education and employment and training programs. The Council convened numerous meetings, conferences, and other forums in which strategic planning for a new system of customer-driven workforce development services occurred. The Council also convened the Commissioner's Policy Group of key policymakers representing the state agencies involved in workforce development and coordinated the activities of the seven interagency works groups that were established to support specific aspects of workforce development planning.

Effective communication and coordination among state-level stakeholders during One-Stop implementation emerged as a problem area for the MassJobs Council and the Career Center Office during the first year of implementation. As the state of Massachusetts began to move from the planning to the implementation stages of its career center initiative, the MassJobs Council's mission evolved and its ability to coordinate and maintain productive relationships with other state-level agencies and departments was constrained. Although the interagency work groups raised important questions and identified key implementation issues and challenges, workgroup members were not vested with decision-making authority on these difficult issues. By mid-1995, the decision was made to put the workgroups "on hold" until key decisions about career center implementation had been made. Some workgroup members felt that they had been removed from the process. Another workgroup called the Interagency Integration Committee was active from October 1995 to August 1996. Comprised of high-level staff from the various participating agencies, this group convened to address some of the issues raised by the other groups around the integrated funding stream. However, it, too, lost momentum. None of the groups has since reconvened.

During the implementation phase, the staff of the state's Career Center Office have emerged as the primary facilitators of communication and coordination between One-Stop stakeholders. The Career Center Office has taken primary responsibility for coordinating (1) horizontal communication between the staff of various state agencies and departments involved in One-Stop initiative, not all of whom are supportive of the initiative; (2) vertical communication between the state and the REBs and between the state and the career centers; and (3) horizontal communication between the REBs, and in some cases, between career centers themselves. By playing an active role, the Career Center Office has provided a buffer between key agency stakeholders who are not in agreement about the career center initiative.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The $11.5 million received by Massachusetts as part of its One-Stop Implementation Grant and a related LMI grant has been used as "seed money" to support the operation of the state Career Center Office, develop a statewide information technology system (described below), develop high-quality marketing materials, support capacity-building efforts at the local level, and support the REBs chosen for early implementation in planning, chartering, and overseeing the operation of the state's initial One-Stop career centers.

However, ongoing operation of the One-Stop career center system as envisioned by the state depends on the availability of an integrated funding stream to support center operations. Planners at the state level identify the development of an integrated funding stream as among the most significant challenges the Massachusetts career center initiative has encountered to date. In One-Stop implementation states that have adopted a collaborative approach to restructuring workforce development services, partner agencies typically commit a proportion of their staff and budgets to the One-Stop effort. In Massachusetts, however, the competitive approach demands that partner agencies and departments transfer funds to the MassJobs Council, which then distributes those funds to the career centers to support integrated customer services, with no concurrent transfer of agency staff.

Initially, state planners assumed that federal workforce development block grant legislation would create an integrated funding stream. When block grant legislation was not passed, Career Center Office staff went directly the state agencies responsible for workforce development programs and asked them to commit funds to the career center initiative. The framework for an integrated funding stream was constructed around the development of formal Interdepartmental Service Agreements (ISAs). Early in the first year of the Massachusetts implementation grant, the MassJobs Council requested that all of the agencies involved in the One-Stop initiative commit their discretionary funds to the career center initiative. Later that year, agency and department managers were asked to identify additional portions of their budgets that could support career centers.

There was some reluctance on the part of many agencies to commit these funds in the absence of evidence that the career center initiative would be a success. Moreover, agency staff understood that by committing their program dollars and responsibilities to the career center initiative, they were putting their own departments in jeopardy—the more dollars and program functions they transferred to the career centers, the greater the likelihood of their own agencies being downsized and reorganized. For these reasons, negotiating funds transfers demanded considerably more time and effort than planners had anticipated.

Despite these obstacles, the MassJobs Council's Career Center Office succeeded in negotiating agreements with most of the state-level partner agencies, including the Department Employment and Training, the Department of Education, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, and the Commission for the Blind. Formal agreements involving substate grantees were also developed to support funds transfers from the Massachusetts Industrial Services Program (responsible for JTPA Title III) and local JTPA service delivery areas (for Title II) to the local career centers.[13] In FY 96, the total planned partner agency support for the operation of the career centers in the three selected regions totaled approximately $10 million. However, these funds had not yet been transferred at the time of the site visit, forcing the one-stop staff to rely almost entirely upon grant funds.

A total of $11 million in agency support has been committed through ISAs for career center operations during FY 97. The largest contributions are from the

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[13] These indirect arrangements were necessary because JTPA Title III funds must, by law, be allocated to substate entities, and because JTPA Title II funds were already committed to local service delivery areas under two-year contracts.

Department of Employment and Training, which is closing its local ES/UI field offices as career centers open ($5.9 million in FY 97); the Department of Transitional Assistance, which has allocated funds to career centers for job search assistance to welfare clients ($3.0 million in FY 97); and the Industrial Services Program, which is transferring responsibility for JTPA Title III services to dislocated workers to career centers as well as supporting the delivery of enhanced services to employers ($1.2 million). To date, only a small amount of JTPA Title II funds have been provided to career centers by local JTPA service delivery areas. Together, these funding commitments will support all but $1 million of the total $11.9 million cost of operating the seven functioning career centers during FY 97.

State planners are under tremendous pressure to showcase the results of the career centers in the initial four regions to convince the state legislature and state agency partners that continuing to invest in career centers is an effective way to meet the workforce development needs of state residents. If all goes well for the One-Stop career center system, the political resolve will be found to continue investing in career centers using an integrated funding stream. Over time, integrated funds will not only support all workforce development services in the career centers, but will be used to support the operations of the state Career Center Office (through the charging of an administrative fee against the various funding sources). Planners anticipate that by July 1998, the statewide network of career centers will be self-sustaining through the integrated funding stream.

Although most respondents at the state level indicated that the integrated funding stream was meeting the short-term need for consolidated funding, they are still eager for the introduction of federal block-grants. Planners feel that block grants would facilitate the career center initiative in Massachusetts in three major ways: (1) by transforming the agency-centered budgeting that currently makes it difficult for state agencies to commit resources to a "competing" entity; (2) by eliminating the need for lengthy contract negotiations with the agency responsible for each categorical program; and (3) by eliminating restrictive program-based eligibility and reporting requirements, thereby making it much easier to operate an integrated program that provides universal access.[14]

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[14] When the partner agencies and departments committed funds to the One-Stop initiative on behalf of their categorical programs, some partners expected that the career centers would assume

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

The Career Center Office is responsible for all capacity building efforts required to support the One-Stop initiative. The Office has undertaken capacity-building efforts in three primary areas: (1) providing comprehensive and ongoing technical assistance to the Regional Employment Boards; (2) training career center management staff about categorical programs; and (3) training career center staff about the state's information technology system, including how to use labor market information products and how to prepare for state-level data collection.

In the Spring of 1996, the Career Center Office organized a technical assistance conference for members and staff of the Regional Employment Boards engaged in One-Stop planning or implementation. The conference provided information on specific One-Stop implementation issues and offered the opportunity for the members and staff of the regional boards to meet and interact with one another. The Career Center Office's objective was to establish a process for implementing and monitoring the statewide One-Stop system. During the conference, state staff instructed participants on the criteria the REBs and centers would be required to meet; offered technical assistance in developing legal documents, such as charters; and responded to issues and questions that had emerged for the earliest career centers that had already begun implementation. Career Center Office staff plan to hold a similar conference annually, to address ongoing One-Stop system-building needs and challenges.

In the absence of workforce development block grants, the career centers have been forced to take responsibility for categorical funding streams and have attempted to implement categorical programs in a totally new context. The Career Center Office, with the assistance of the Department of Employment and Training, has organized training sessions around the eligibility and reporting requirements for the different categorical programs. Locally, career center managers have worked with their REBs to develop protocols for implementing these programs in a One-Stop environment. State-level respondents indicated that local career center staff have struggled to adhere to the

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implementation and reporting requirements identical to the programs formerly represented by these funds. The individual career centers, however, are committed to providing universal access to their customers and feel that program-based recruiting and reporting will seriously hamper their efforts to achieve universal services.

legal requirements of categorical programs while attempting to render program boundaries invisible to center customers.

Building staff capacity with respect to the state's information technology system has included two main components: (1) instructing career center staff in navigating the Massachusetts on-line Job Bank and other resources on the Internet, and (2) helping staff prepare to use the state's new data collection infrastructure. Although the staff of most career centers are already adept at manipulating on-line search tools, the Career Center Office provided training in the use of the World Wide Web in an effort to ensure a minimum level of competency in using Internet access and search tools among staff in all of the career centers. The training also provided an opportunity to solicit feedback from career center staff on the quality of state's automated customer information system, and to gather ideas for new links or products that would facilitate service at the local level.

In terms of state-level data collection, the Career Center Office is working with an outside consulting firm, *Synetics*,[15] to develop an information system with the capacity to extract and manipulate data from all of the career centers. Since the centers' internal data tracking systems are not standardized, the Career Center Office and Synetics are working with centers to inform staff of state-level information systems development and to establish interface capability and reporting procedures.

The Career Center Office is committed to creating a coherent workforce development system rather than a loose collection of independently functioning career centers. At the same time, it wants to support local innovation in the design and delivery of customer services. To balance these sometimes conflicting goals, state staff seek to avoid an overly prescriptive training and technical assistance approach and encourage ongoing communication among the members and staff of all of the REBs and career centers.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

The state has invested heavily in developing automated products that will support the delivery of core services to customers of the individual career centers. All career centers are required to provide customer access to the state's electronic Job Bank that can be accessed through the state's Internet home page. This information system, with links to other state- and federal-level workforce development information and resources, is the one element of the career center system that will be consistent across sites. At the time of the site visit, the state had established electronic links from the One-Stop home page to a variety of other World Wide Web sites, including those of the individual career centers, colleges, universities, other training institutions, institutions offering financial aid, state and federal labor market information sources, state and federal economic data sources, and the statewide Job Bank. The state has supported local sites in establishing links to information about local service providers and employment and training opportunities.

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[15] Synetics has since changed its name to Synetics/SAIC.

The state is also developing a statewide Talent Bank, an Education and Training Database, and an account management system to track employer use of the career centers.[16] Early versions of these systems can be accessed through the career centers, but the Career Center Office expects to refine them based on customer feedback from the career centers and on-line customer responses. The state is not involved in the development or procurement of self-contained automated products for the delivery of career exploration, resume development, or other core services in the career centers. Rather, center operators are free to select the products most appropriate for their local markets.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Career centers in Massachusetts are required to collect data to track center usage and inform their own continuous improvement efforts. These data are generally similar or identical to those required by the state to track system-level effectiveness, but are generated in a form that meets local needs rather than state requirements. Since the Career Center Office understands the career centers to be *its* customers rather than the reverse, the state has accepted responsibility for creating an architecture that will extract, manipulate, and store data, and an interface that will facilitate communication between the state system and each of the local systems. Each center is responsible for collecting a standard set of data on all individual customers and may select its own software for this purpose. The state system will then upload this information into its data management system so that it can be shared with participating agencies at the state level.[17] The Career Center Office envisions this system backbone being built according to a model of "just-in-time" data collection. This state-level architecture will eventually support career centers by eliminating the majority of their state-level reporting requirements, enabling them to focus on delivering services to customers.

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[16] *FutureWorks*, one of the career centers chartered by the Hampden County Regional Employment Board, purchased a similar system of its own and has continued to use it; other career centers use the system developed by the state. As new career centers open, they will be given the option of using the state system or developing their own.

The Career Center Office recognizes that the Regional Employment Boards also require electronic linkages to the career centers and the state Career Center Office. A $2.7 million information technology (IT) bond measure has been introduced into the state legislature. The Career Center Office expects that it will pass and plans to commit a portion of these funds to developing electronic linkages between and among the centers, the REBs, and the Career Center Office. The remainder of the funds will be used to purchase several network servers to support further development of the statewide data extraction and reporting system.

Marketing

The Career Center Office's marketing efforts have been carried out in consultation with a marketing advisory board composed of several individuals and groups of consultants involved in different aspects of marketing. The state has invested heavily in market research to identify customer needs as they have changed over time and by region. This research included telephone interviews with 200 owners or personnel managers of Massachusetts businesses, focus groups with employer and individuals customers, and a survey of employers. Informal feedback from the REBs, all of which have significant private-sector representation, has also been taken into consideration.

The research findings about customer needs and preferences have informed every stage of the development, implementation, and marketing of the One-Stop initiative. In fact, the MassJobs Council began marketing its One-Stop vision before implementation by publicly identifying the need for a new system and describing the features that its customers were demanding. Employers and job-seekers contacted during marketing research expressed frustration about their previous experiences with the public sector employment system, but agreed that if the state invested in a "totally new system," they would give it a try *once*. The MassJobs Council and Career Center Office have used these findings to market the initiative within state government. If the process of implementing the career center system slows because of state-government indecision, MassJobs Council fears that customers will reject the system as "totally new," and fail to make use of it.

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[17] The state has faced a challenge in developing an interface that will permit data to be shared between its client/server network and the mainframe computers that store data in some of the participating agencies and departments.

Early on, the job of the marketing staff of the Career Center Office entailed managing the marketing that was already occurring through direct media coverage and subsequent coverage of political challenges to the entire One-Stop initiative. When the One-Stop grant was awarded, it generated significant and ongoing media coverage both of the grant and the system transformation the grant was supporting. Respondents at the state level expressed ambivalence about this attention: on the one hand, the media coverage generated interest in, and business for, the One-Stop centers; on the other hand, the public scrutiny served to politicize the entire change process. In Massachusetts, the career center initiative has established a considerable public presence and created political controversy. As a result, the Career Center Office and the career centers feel tremendous pressure to demonstrate that the career centers are effective.

As more career centers opened, and existing career centers began to conduct high volumes of business, the Career Center Office recognized the need to develop marketing materials that would bring more employers (and more *diverse* employers) into the career centers. The Career Center Office is working on a 25-page brochure designed for this purpose. The brochure will be available in the local career centers, along with local marketing materials. The Career Center Office has also developed a One-Stop logo, to be featured prominently in all of the career centers (although each center may also have its own logo). The logo does not represent the MassJobs Council or any other state agency or department. Rather, it is intended to represent the One-Stop initiative itself.

In Massachusetts, the key to marketing the career center initiative lies in the ability of the REBs to coordinate with the individual centers in attracting new business. The Career Center Office, therefore, encourages and promotes local marketing efforts and stands ready to assist career centers in developing and carrying out their local marketing plans.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Massachusetts planners had originally anticipated completing statewide implementation of career centers in all sixteen regions within the three-year implementation grant period. However, several members of the state legislature were concerned that the old system would be dismantled before there was evidence that the new system was effective. Under the threat of reversing One-Stop implementation, the MassJobs Council worked out a compromise with the Lt. Governor, the legislature, and the REBs whereby the roll-out schedule would be extended and performance data collected to inform the initiative's continued progress.

During the second year of the implementation grant, a total of seven career centers became operational across three of the four initially selected regions. An additional ten regions continued to plan for career centers, and the state continued to develop the technology-based backbone for core services including job banks, talent banks, an education and training database, labor market information databases, customer satisfaction databases and feedback mechanisms, and direct links for employer access.

Massachusetts has taken a bold and comprehensive approach to reinventing its public employment and training services and delivery systems. It is the only state to have adopted a thoroughly competitive approach to the provision of workforce development services; it is also the only state that is simultaneously constructing an entirely new statewide system of workforce development centers and dismantling its old employment and training system. The fact that no existing state agency is playing a lead role in One-Stop implementation, the emphasis on regionally-determined delivery systems and service designs, and the central role of market forces in system design and implementation also distinguish the Massachusetts One-Stop approach from that of other states.

The MassJobs Council and Career Center Office have faced numerous challenges in implementing the state's competitive approach to workforce development. Among the issues that continue to impact the state's progress in supporting the emerging statewide network of One-Stop career centers are the following: (1) maintaining a balance between providing clear leadership to support One-Stop system development through the Career Center Office and generating consensus among a variety of state-level stakeholders; (2) improving state-level resource allocation mechanisms and strategies; and (3) balancing state policy guidance on systemic One-Stop issues with encouragement of local autonomy in developing a system that is "state-guided and locally-driven." Each of these issues is addressed briefly below.

At the state level, the MassJobs Council and the Career Center Office face the challenge of providing strong leadership on the One-Stop initiative while maintaining quality relationships with partner state agencies and departments. This has been a formidable challenge in Massachusetts. Unlike states whose local One-Stop initiatives have been accompanied by a reorganization of state workforce development agencies to consolidate leadership of the One-Stop system within existing state agencies, Massachusetts has charged a separate entity, the MassJobs Council, with primary responsibility for the planning and administration of the One-Stop system. Although joint planning and decision-making between MassJobs Council and the partner state agencies has been a feature of One-Stop implementation in Massachusetts, the MassJobs Council Career Center Office has found it difficult to simultaneously provide clear leadership on the career center initiative and engage in collective decision-making with the state-level staff of programs whose program funds will ultimately support the new career center system.

Another challenge for the Career Center Office has been its charge to develop a mechanism to transfer of funds from various state agencies and departments to support the One-Stop initiative. Although Interdepartmental Services Agreements provide a short-term solution to this problem, their negotiation has absorbed considerable CCO staff time and caused confusion among the REBs and career center staff about what responsibilities they have to follow the regulations and reporting requirements that accompany dollars transferred to the career centers from the various categorical programs. The fact that the JTPA Title II system has not yet provided career centers with substantial funding support has made the funding issues even more difficult.

Although each career center is encouraged to develop innovative services and delivery mechanisms, the state also seeks to establish some level of consistency among the centers so that they will be recognized as parts of a single statewide system. The Career Center Office seeks to support local innovation, but is also concerned to demonstrate the effectiveness of the system as a whole to the world at large. Staff have found it difficult to strike a balance between encouraging local autonomy and providing guidance to support the common systemic elements of the career center initiative.

In spite of these challenges, the One-Stop initiative in Massachusetts has met with much success. Among the key innovations that have resulted from the One-Stop implementation process are the following: (1) the development of new partnerships among private and public sector organizations; (2) significant private sector support and involvement in planning and developing the new Massachusetts career center system; and (3) the introduction of multiple levels of competition to the process of selecting and maintaining career center operators.

The open bidding process has brought together coalitions of diverse organizations to operate career centers, including consortia of private firms and community-based organizations. The combined capacity of these different types of organizations to reach different sectors of the employer and job seeker communities has increased dramatically under the Massachusetts model of cooperation and coordination within a competitive framework.[18]

The private sector has been significantly involved in all aspects of planning and implementing the Massachusetts career center initiative. One-Stop planners recognized early on that employer support was needed to sustain the public employment system in any form, and was absolutely crucial to reforming it. Employers were consulted in market research and their feedback was incorporated into the new system design. Employers have also played key roles in every stage of implementation. Career Center Office staff indicated that if employer support had not been so strong and consistent, the entire career center initiative would have been threatened.

Finally, Massachusetts has introduced competition to the public sector in significant and comprehensive ways. Although many states have introduced a limited amount of competition to their employment and training programs, such as competition to select service providers for key functions, Massachusetts has opened the entire system to competition in an effort to ensure that all aspects of the system are performance-driven.

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[18] For example, in the Hampden County Region, one of the selected career center operators is a consortium including the local Department of Employment and Training, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the local Chamber of Commerce, the local community college, and the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts. In the Boston Region, Drake Beam Morin, a private-sector outplacement firm, partnered with the local Department of Employment and Training to operate a career center.

Because of the dramatic change that the career center system will bring about, key legislators, social service providers, and welfare agencies are approaching this system transformation with apprehension. Only sustained and meaningful communication among all partners will make it possible to address the fundamental challenges posed by Massachusetts' One-Stop approach thoughtfully, with determination, and with good will. These qualities will be necessary, as well, in order to identify the lessons learned from the Massachusetts experience to inform system changes underway in other states.

APPENDIX N

FUTUREWORKS CAREER CENTER
SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During September 1996

FUTUREWORKS CAREER CENTER
SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 3/6/97

FUTUREWORKS CAREER CENTER
SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Hampden County is a semi-urban region located midway between Boston and New York. The County is dotted with small cities, towns, and municipalities, including Springfield (the largest town with a population of 155,000 residents), Chicopee, Holyoke, and Ludlow. Industrial production and commercial trade were the mainstays of the region's economy until the late 1980s, when a major recession blanketed much of New England, including Massachusetts. Like other major industrial areas, the structure of the economy has changed drastically since that time. There are now substantially fewer manufacturing jobs and many of the manufacturing jobs that do exist require a high level of technical expertise. Employment opportunities in the retail trade and services sectors are increasing but do not match the wages previously paid in the manufacturing sector. These structural changes in the economy have resulted in a growing mismatch between the education, skills, and work experiences of many local job-seekers and the workforce needs of local employers.

The unemployment rates in the Springfield metropolitan area and Hampden County reflect this mismatch. Although statewide unemployment rates had shrunk to around 4.4% at the time of the evaluation site visit, Hampden County's unemployment stood at 5.1%, and Springfield's at more than 6%. Unemployment remained high, even though the local economy was expanding somewhat. Underemployment was also a concern among Springfield residents.

The FutureWorks Career Center is one of two One-Stop career centers serving residents of Hampden County. Hampden County residents may receive services either from FutureWorks, located in the City of Springfield, or from CareerPoint, a second One-Stop career center located about six miles away in Holyoke.[1] FutureWorks is unique in that it is the first One-Stop career center in the state of Massachusetts operated solely by a private for-profit entity.[2]

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[1] In fact, Massachusetts residents may receive services from any of the state's career centers.

The selection of Employment and Training Institute, Inc. (ETI)—a private-for-profit firm based in New Jersey—to operate one of the two One-Stop career centers in Hampden County was strongly influenced by the commitment to a "competitive model" by the state of Massachusetts as well as by the members of the Hampden County Regional Employment Board (REB). Both state and regional workforce development planners believed that the introduction of competition into the design and delivery of government programs would revitalize the system, prompt improved performance, and spawn innovation. Moreover, the MassJobs Council wanted to use competition as a way to shift the focus of workforce development programs away from reporting requirements toward meeting customers' needs. This new focus would, in turn, empower users of the system to make informed choices about how to meet their individual employment or training needs.

As described in the state profile, the MassJobs Council's vision for a statewide career center system included competition at three levels. First, the 16 Regional Employment Boards in Massachusetts were invited to compete for One-Stop funds based on their proposals for implementing One-Stop Career Center systems in their respective regions. The incentive structure was such that the earlier sites would receive the bulk of funds and would inform the processes in the later implementation sites. The vision of the Hampden County Regional Employment Board was consistent with the state-level vision in its enthusiasm for a transformed system based on a competitive model. As a result, the Hampden County REB was selected by the state as one of four regions to receive first-year implementation grant funding, and one of two regions considered ready to implement an open competitive process to select career center operators and charter and oversee career center operations.

Second, through an open bidding process administered by each selected Regional Employment Board, public agencies, private firms, and community-based organizations would be able to compete for selection as center operators. The Hampden County Regional Employment Board's request for proposals encouraged bidders to propose fee-based "enhanced" services that, in combination with required core (free) services would make a full spectrum of workforce development services available to job seekers and employers. The REB also attempted to select different career center operators who would offer contrasting menus of services that would offer a high degree of customer choice. The Hampden County REB also sought center operators that demonstrated creativity in designing workforce development services and a commitment to continuous improvement.

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[2] Several of the One-Stop career centers operating in Massachusetts at the time of the evaluation site visit were operated by consortia in which private sector entities participated, but FutureWorks was the only center operated solely by a private company.

The third level of competition envisioned by the MassJobs Council as part of the new statewide system of career centers was competition between local centers that would compete for the same customer base. Just as Regional Employment Boards were permitted a high degree of latitude in establishing their career center systems, local operators in Hampden County were permitted latitude in developing their vision for the operation of individual centers.

The two entities selected to operate career centers in Hampden County were each encouraged to develop their own areas of expertise. FutureWorks has enjoyed success providing a wide range of enhanced services to the employer community in Springfield, and has since become a major player in economic development and business networks throughout the county. CareerPoint, the second Hampden County career center—operated by a non-profit consortium of public educational institutions, public employment and training agencies, and the local chamber of commerce[3]—has focused on recruiting customers from minority communities.[4] Both centers maintain a high level of contact with each other as well as with the other major education, employment, and training providers in the region. Electronic linkages to a statewide information system are perceived as important in weaving these independent providers into an integrated state system.

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[3] CareerPoint is a private non-profit corporation created through the collaboration of the local Chamber of Commerce, Holyoke Community College, the Department of Employment and Training (whose local office staff previously provided ES, UI, UI profiling and worker reemployment, and TAA/TRA services to Hampden County residents), the Department of Transitional Assistance (whose local offices administering time-limited cash assistance under welfare reform), and the Donahue Institute of the University of Massachusetts.

[4] CareerPoint is located in a predominantly minority community. One of the local partners in the CareerPoint Collaboration—the Chamber of Commerce—had developed a reputation for providing high-quality information and services to minority communities. CareerPoint has benefited from the Chamber's experience and expertise.

The remainder of this profile focuses on the FutureWorks Career Center operated by ETI. However, it is important to understand that both centers—FutureWorks and CareerPoint—serve the same local community. The two centers are located within several miles of each other, and are available to serve the same job-seeker and employer base. They compete with one another, but they are also partners in fulfilling the needs of job-seekers and employers in Hampden County. The uncertainties of this relationship are indicative of some of the more fundamental questions that have emerged as the state has attempted to implement its controversial approach to redesigning workforce development services.

Several contextual factors have influenced the development and implementation of One-Stop Career Centers in Hampden County. These include (1) the highly charged political environment surrounding the career center system at both the state and local levels; (2) the need for the transformed system to respond to the challenges created by the implementation of welfare reform at the state and local levels; and (3) the structure of the Springfield-area economy and labor market. Each of these is addressed briefly below.

The implementation of the One stop initiative in Massachusetts has occurred in the context of a highly-charged political environment. Massachusetts' decision to use a competitive model to transform the public employment system has been surrounded by tremendous controversy. In June 1996, the state legislature attempted to restrict the state's ability to reallocate public funds from other employment and training programs to support the One-Stop initiative. Although the legislative opposition has, to some degree, subsided, career centers throughout the state, including FutureWorks, have come within days of being shut-down. Under a negotiated compromise, career centers in the four regions selected for initial funding will be permitted to continue operations, and ten additional regions will be permitted to plan for future career center implementation, while information about career center effectiveness is collected and reviewed. As a result, the experiences of the career centers in Hampden County are being observed with great interest by partisans on both sides of the issue.

The state has implemented dramatic changes in its welfare system, introducing both time-limited benefits and widespread work requirements. The MassJobs Council has been charged with developing a comprehensive strategic plan to assist welfare clients in finding gainful employment. The MassJobs Council and the career center system have been designated as the delivery system that will have the responsibility to ensure that welfare recipients receive effective job search assistance. Changes in the welfare system at the local level have already impacted the clientele seeking services at the Hampden County career centers.

The state, including the Springfield area, is emerging from a lengthy and far-reaching recession, exacerbated by sizable reductions in defense industry sales in the late 1980s and early 1990s. After 1988, unemployment in the state of Massachusetts tripled, exceeding 7% by 1990. Since 1991, the state has experienced low, but steady job growth in most sectors, although manufacturing employment has continued to decline, as have employment opportunities in state and federal government agencies and departments. The Springfield area has experienced substantial, if uneven, growth in wholesale and retail trade, and moderate growth in the production and service sectors. A mismatch between the labor need of employers and the skills of job-seekers continues to plague the local economy. As a result both employers and job seekers perceive a need for assistance with the labor-exchange function as well as a need for increased workforce education and training.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution of the Local One-Stop Design

The design of workforce development services at the FutureWorks Career Center has been influenced by the state's vision of a competitive system, by the Regional Employment Board's interpretation of that vision, and by the ability of the FutureWorks staff and management, with the strong support of the Regional Employment Board, to effectively combine workforce development theory and high-performance workplace practice.

The state vision, as described above and in the state One-Stop profile, calls for the delivery of integrated customer-driven services by center operators that are selected through a competitive process managed by Regional Employment Boards. As described in the One-Stop profile for the State of Massachusetts, federal block grant legislation was expected to create an integrated funding stream to support the delivery of workforce development services by a statewide network of One-Stop career centers. In the absence of federal block grant legislation, the state Career Center Office has negotiated "Interdepartmental Services Agreements" with the state agencies responsible for administering Employment Services, Title III services for dislocated workers, welfare-to-work services, vocational rehabilitation, services for the blind, employment services for individuals with mental health disabilities, and adult education services for the allocation of agency funds for the operation of One-Stop career centers.[5] Only a small amount of JTPA Title II funds for services to economically disadvantaged adults and youth was available for career center operations during the first implementation year, because JTPA two-year service delivery contracts were already underway.

In Hampden County, the Regional Employment Board expressed great interest in and enthusiasm for innovation in the reengineering of workforce development services. Although the Hampden County REB's request for proposals identified the minimum services that a center operator would be required to provide to job-seekers and employers, it also encouraged bidders to propose fee-based "enhanced services in order to make a "full spectrum of workforce development services available to job-seekers and employers in the county. As described previously, the REB envisioned that the operators of the two career centers would develop contrasting menus of services to increase overall customer choice.

The Regional Employment Boards in Massachusetts received initial funding to plan and implement career centers from the MassJobs Council. However, over time, they are expected to become self-supporting. Some REBs have opted to generate operating expenses by requiring center operators to "pay" a fee (e.g., $100,000, which would be deducted from the operator's start-up funds) in exchange for the charter to operate a One-Stop career center. Rather than imposing a chartering fee, the Hampden County REB requires that center operators share a proportion of the fees generated from enhanced services with the REB. It is unclear whether these arrangements will be sustained over time.

Finally, the Hampden County Regional Employment Boards sought operators that demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the state's vision for the future of workforce development services in Massachusetts. The Board was interested in operators that could demonstrate creativity in approaching workforce development issues and a commitment to continuous improvement. Just as the REBs were permitted a high degree of latitude in establishing their visions of local career center systems, the selected career center operators were also permitted latitude in developing their visions for the operations of individual centers. The Hampden County REB had no preconceived ideas about particular types of services associated with particular operators, but placed a great deal of emphasis on operator capacity for innovation.

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[5] Massachusetts has developed a statewide automated telephone system for taking applications for UI benefits that is operated separately from the career centers. At the two career centers in Hampden County, staff viewed this as a positive development, because it enabled the career centers to differentiate themselves from the old system of "unemployment offices" and to market themselves as brokers of career education and career development assistance.

The proposal submitted by ETI for the operation of the FutureWorks Career Center articulated a vision consistent with that of MassJobs Council and the Hampden REB. In its proposal, ETI/FutureWorks evidenced a commitment to creating a "state-of-the-art" career center that would serve as a national model of comprehensive, customer-driven services. The staff at FutureWorks are knowledgeable about contemporary workforce development issues and skilled in high-performance workplace practices. Although FutureWorks and its "sister" career centers replace the local public Employment Service field offices previously operated by the state Department of Employment and Training, the vision for FutureWorks is not that of a "placement agency," it is of a broker of community workforce development services, labor market information, and career education in Hampden County. Staff attitudes reflect this orientation. They are committed to applying continuous improvement strategies and team skills in the design and operation of customer services. Because it has been fashioned "of a whole cloth," rather than piecemeal, the Center has been immune to the culture clash commonly experienced by staff in One-Stop Centers formed through the consolidation of multiple public agencies and departments.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

FutureWorks Career Center has operationalized the concept of universal access in a variety of ways. Among the most innovative is the implementation of a universal membership system. When individuals visit the Center, they are encouraged to become members. Membership is available to anyone who visits FutureWorks.

The rationale for marketing services as membership-based is at-least three-fold. First, membership conveys to the customer the idea that he or she is important and deserving of high-quality service. Second, membership-based services imply that membership is separate from employment. Since FutureWorks is committed to educating the community about how to prepare for the "new workforce" through lifelong learning, the center encourages members to draw upon FutureWorks resources for their lifelong employment and training needs, not simply for the next job. Third, membership is a tangible means of preserving universality of access when members have very different needs—all members receive the same membership card and enter the system in the same way, even though they may receive services of differing intensity.[6]

Providing a well-staffed, well-equipped resource room is perceived as another means of ensuring universal access. The resource room at FutureWorks is attractive and provides access to a wide range of information both on-site and through Internet access. Moreover, staff members in the resource room speak several languages and are equipped to assist FutureWorks' diverse membership. Some equipment has been adapted to meet the needs of the hearing- or sight-impaired. FutureWorks perceives the staff members of the resource room to be among the most valuable human resource assets in the center because of the number of members with whom they interact everyday and the value of the services they provide.

FutureWorks has adopted extended hours in an effort to render services more accessible to customers. The Center is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with extended hours on Tuesday evenings (until 8:00 p.m.)and Saturdays (9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.). FutureWorks will also remain open beyond its normal operating hours for special projects such as job fairs or pre-arranged tours of the facilities.

Customer Choice

FutureWorks provides a wide range of services to job-seeker and employer members and ensures that these services are easily accessible. The Center sees itself as a major point of entry into the regional workforce development system, including the services provided on-site by FutureWorks staff as well as services provided by public and private providers throughout the region. FutureWorks offers high quality information about careers, jobs, training programs, and tuition assistance, and can provide counseling, assessment, and limited course instruction through the workshops available at the Center. Staff stated, "If we do not have the information, we will find it, and we'll assist our members in navigating their way through it." It should be noted that FutureWorks, in part because it has not taken over the functions of all public workforce development agencies, sees itself as a broker rather than as a provider of all services to all people.[7] Rather, its expertise lies in empowering job-seekers and assisting employers in meeting their workforce development needs. With few exceptions, the choice of service type and intensity is made by individual Center customers, rather than as a result of program-based requirements.[8] FutureWorks seeks to provide its members with a wide array of services, access to services not available on-site, and information that will assist them in good career-decision-making.

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[6] One FutureWorks "member," a welfare recipient, expressed enthusiasm for her card because it served as a tangible evidence that the system had invested in her: FutureWorks trusted her to "carry that card and run it through these machines just like all of the other people."

Integrated Services

FutureWorks has identified service integration as its most challenging objective. Although the internal organization of services provided by ETI at the FutureWorks Career Center follows a fully-integrated design, not all public workforce development funds were reallocated nor all categorical program responsibilities reassigned to the One-Stop career centers. The most notable program/funding streams not yet consolidated into One-Stop career center operations at the state level are JTPA Title II funds for services to economically disadvantaged individuals and Title III funds for dislocated worker services. Both FutureWorks and the Hampden County Regional Employment Board anticipate that JTPA funds will eventually comprise a portion of the funds that support the statewide career center initiative. If and when JTPA funds are reallocated to state career center operators, the range of customer services available within career centers is likely to be further enhanced and Center staff will alter internal objectives, operations, and performance measures accordingly.

FutureWorks has developed two strategies to support integration of services under these circumstances. First, through staff training efforts, ETI ensures that Career

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[7] At the time of the site visit, although FutureWorks had replaced the local Employment Service field office operated by the state Department of Employment and Training, a number of other employment-related agencies continued to function within the same service area. These included a JTPA Title III-funded dislocated worker center, the local JTPA Title II administrative entity, and the local office of the state agency responsible for vocational rehabilitation. As an information and services broker, FutureWorks maintains regular contact with the agencies as well as a wide range of local education and training service providers.

[8] Over time, FutureWorks has been forced to introduce distinct procedures to meet the service or reporting requirements of some categorical funding streams. For example, to meet its responsibility to provide reemployment services to UI profilees, FutureWorks schedules reemployment workshops for and monitors attendance by members belonging to this target group. To accommodate requirements for veterans' preference, an outstationed DET staff member at FutureWorks has a counseling caseload consisting exclusively of veterans. The Center, however, goes to great lengths to make these distinctions invisible to Center customers.

Specialists at the FutureWorks Center are aware of all training and workforce development services available to Center members. FutureWorks requires that all staff "become very familiar" with the requirements of the following programs or funding sources: JTPA Titles II and III; Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA/TRA); Full Employment Program (welfare-to-work program); Job Corps; state and federal student financial aid grants and loans; the federal Enterprise Zone program, veterans' employment services; and vocational rehabilitation services.

Second, FutureWorks will assess the availability of funds in such programs, assist customers through the application and approval process, and conduct member follow-ups to ensure customer satisfaction with program services. One FutureWorks staff member is the designated "specialist" on these programs and assists FutureWorks members in applying for program services.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

The state's emphasis on local autonomy in the design and operation of career center services and the wide variation in the capacities of center operators has made the development of performance measures at the state level a formidable challenge. The state has identified four general areas against which the career centers will be held accountable. These include: customer satisfaction; customer outcomes; market growth and penetration; and gross product. Although the state has developed performance measures in each of these areas, considerable responsibility in implementing such measures has been given to the Regional Employment Boards. The REBs are responsible for implementing the measures to assess the performance of individual career centers. There is considerable interest at the regional and local levels in establishing high-quality performance measures, but also widespread uncertainty about the nature of such measures and their use.

To respond to the state's "competitive model," FutureWorks' management is attempting to establish performance criteria that accomplish three sets of objectives: (1) providing information about whether the Center has accomplished state, regional, and local goals; (2) allowing for comparisons of performance across local sites; and (3) informing the continuous improvement process within FutureWorks. To support these objectives, ETI has implemented a sophisticated management information system designed to track member outcomes.

Accomplishing state, regional and local goals. Because the career centers are replacing the local Division of Employment and Training (DET) field offices in their respective areas, the state of Massachusetts is under tremendous pressure—both inside and outside of state government—to demonstrate that its new approach to workforce development is a success. Under these circumstances, performance measures that compare outcomes of the old system to outcomes of the new system are crucial. At the same time, however, the new vision of workforce development has established different objectives than those associated with the old system. Negotiating measures that are both useful to practitioners of the new system and that allow for comparison to the performance of the old system poses a formidable challenge to the MassJobs Council, the REBs, and the centers themselves.

Comparing performance across different local sites. Another challenge posed by the "competitive model" of workforce development services in the state of Massachusetts arises from the emphasis on local autonomy. The Regional Employment Boards allowed considerable latitude in the development of plans for center operation. Presumably, centers will begin to develop "specialties" to enhance overall customer choice. However, if different centers specialize in different types of services or customers, this makes it difficult to compare the performance of "competing" centers.

Informing Continuous Improvement. FutureWorks, in addition to implementing a management information system designed to track customer outcomes, has developed and implemented a procedure to promote and monitor high-performance outcomes. The "No Excuses" Team is a cross-functional, rotating group of six FutureWorks staff charged with maintaining customer focus, designing mechanisms for customer feedback, and insuring that such feedback informs the continuous improvement process.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Local Governance Arrangements. The structure of the One-Stop initiative in Hampden County has been heavily influenced by organizational changes initiated at the state-level. In 1988, the state of Massachusetts enacted legislation that created both the state-level MassJobs Council and the network of Regional Employment Boards (REBs) that currently governs and oversees the state's One-Stop career centers. The state Career Center Office serves as the day-to-day liaison between the MassJobs Council, its partner state-level departments and agencies, and Regional Employment Boards on policy, procedural, and fiscal issues related to the start-up and operation of One-Stop career centers.

Regional Employment Boards were given considerable autonomy in developing local plans that meet identified workforce development needs and in selecting career center operators. The Hampden County REB formed a One-Stop Implementation Task Force to develop concrete strategies and methods for implementing the career center system in Hampden County. The members of this committee developed the strategy for implementing the competitive bidding process and wrote the request for proposals (RFP) from prospective career center operators. In Hampden County, the Regional Employment Board sought "inventive partners" rather than vendors who would carry out specific pre-defined services.

Because Hampden County was one of the first regions in the state to engage in a competitive bidding process, many important decisions had not yet been made about various dimensions of the career center system at the time the RFP was issued—including the nature of the integrated funding stream that would be used to support career center operations and the extent to which center operators would be responsible for operations/reporting linked to categorical programs. To ensure that the selected career center operators would be able to function in this rapidly evolving arena, the Hampden REB emphasized the importance of flexibility and the ability to work with other agencies, service providers, and community-based organizations in its request-for-proposal process.[9]

Locally, the selected career centers are responsible to the REBs for meeting the terms of their charters. The charters to operate career centers are revocable if center operators fail to meet identified performance benchmarks. Center managers and staff work closely with the REBs on policy and procedural issues, local economic development initiatives, and efforts to identify emerging community needs and strategies to address these needs. Center managers also maintain frequent contact with the state Career Center Office staff for technical support and assistance with reporting and compliance issues.

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[9] Despite the emphasis on the need for flexibility, FutureWorks management have been dismayed by the need to adapt to circumstances that differ dramatically from the integrated funding stream and services described in the RFP. Among these differences are the need to operate TAA/TRA, and reemployment services for UI profilees according to the rules and reporting requirements of these categorical programs.

FutureWorks Career Center is managed by an Executive Director whose previous assignment for ETI was to design and operate a dislocated worker center in Connecticut based on the principles of customer-driven outcome-based services. The management team for the FutureWorks Center includes managers of the Center's four functional divisions (MIS/Administration, Career Development Services, Employer Services, and Community Relations/Marketing). Because all staff at the Center work for the same entity, establishing cross-agency staffing along functional lines has not been an issue.

Participating Local Agencies. The career center approach envisioned by the state and local workforce development policymakers would have "leapfrogged" the difficult process of building local partnerships among different workforce development entities by establishing a single career center operator responsible for offering all services under an integrated funding stream. In the long-term, the Hampden County REB and FutureWorks anticipate increased consolidation of workforce development services and the replacement of multiple categorical programs by a cohesive system with an integrated funding stream. At present, however, FutureWorks is functioning as a broker of services in an environment in which a number of different agencies, service providers, and categorical programs are still operating. In this context, the FutureWorks Career Center is becoming an increasingly important community resource in the areas of labor exchange and economic development.

To be an effective broker of community services, FutureWorks has invested heavily in outreach to (1) local institutional partners, (2) community-based organizations, and (3) area education and training providers. The relationship between FutureWorks and each of these types of organizations is addressed briefly below. FutureWorks anticipates that the network of these providers of training and other services will become increasingly organized and better able to support complementary community initiatives, such as welfare reform and school-to-work.

Institutional Partners are the other state agencies with which FutureWorks maintains cross-referral relationships and/or frequent institutional contact. Institutional partners include:

- The Hampden County Workers Assistance Center, which provides services to dislocated workers under JTPA Title III funds; and the

Massachusetts Industrial Services Program, which is the state-level agency that has been responsible for administering Title III services to dislocated workers and rapid response services to employers.

- The Hampden County Employment and Training Consortium, which administers services to economically disadvantaged workers under JTPA Title II.
- The Urban League and the Massachusetts Career Development Institute, which are contracted service providers under JTPA Title II.
- The regional office of the state Department of Employment and Training (DET), which is responsible for administering ES, UI, TAA/TRA, and reemployment services to UI profiles through field offices in areas that have not yet implemented One-Stop career centers.
- The local offices of the state Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), which is responsible for providing time-limited cash assistance and employment-related services to individuals under welfare reform legislation.
- The regional office of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, which administers vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with serious disabilities.
- The Massachusetts Commission for Blind, which administers rehabilitation services to individuals with visual impairments.

FutureWorks also maintains regular contact with a wide array of additional economic development entities, service providers, and educational programs and institutions. At the time of the site visit in September 1996, 48 such organizations had visited FutureWorks since its opening in June.

Community-based Organizations with which FutureWorks maintains regular contact include a wide range of social service and non-profit organizations, as well as libraries, civic associations, and religious or cultural institutions. At the time of the site visit, FutureWorks had contacted 81 such organizations in writing and by telephone in order to invite them to visit the Center and learn about the services provided there.

Potential Education and Training Provider Partners include training institutions with which FutureWorks (and the Department of Employment and Training field offices before the career centers opened) has not yet developed a formal cross-referral relationship. In an effort to expand the range of training providers with which the Center maintains ongoing relationships, FutureWorks has contacted 36 training institutions, colleges, universities, and academies in western Massachusetts to learn more about their programs and invite them to learn about the services available at FutureWorks.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

The environment at the FutureWorks Career Center supports a high level of both formal and informal communication. Formal channels of communication have been institutionalized in FutureWorks through the organization and management of staff. The managers of each functional area support innovation and creativity on the part of their staff by regularly soliciting their concerns, ideas and questions, and bringing them to the attention of other managers in an effort to ensure complementarity between the objective and strategies of these functional areas. Staff at FutureWorks are divided into four primary functional divisions, including (1) Career Development Services, (2) Employer Services, (3) MIS/Administrative Services, and (4) Community Relations and Marketing Services.

Teamwork and communication skills are evident among staff of all divisions at all levels. Staff of each division meet with the division manager weekly. Staff members are also encouraged to approach managers with questions or concerns as they arise. Managers, in turn, also meet with each other and with the Executive Director on a weekly basis, and are encouraged to bring other issues to the group's attention as they arise. Whole-staff meetings and brainstorming sessions also occur on a regular basis. All staff have can also send and receive both internal and external electronic mail.

Cross-functional teams are used to address specific activities. For example, Employer Services staff coordinate with Administrative Services staff to plan job fairs or other on-site services for employers. Career Development Services staff coordinate with Community Relations and resource room staff to identify providers of training for specific career areas. Teams are also formed to develop ideas for new services or new means of service delivery, or to address specific challenges. Once a cross-functional team's objectives are met, the team is disbanded.

Many communication mechanisms have also been established to promote customer feedback, which is then used to inform the continuous improvement process. FutureWorks' management sees its own staff as its customers, and uses similar feedback processes to ensure their satisfaction. Visible suggestion boxes are strategically located throughout the Center to encourage customer input into the strategic planning process, and to alert FutureWorks staff of problems or issues that require attention. Staff who prefer anonymity are encouraged to contribute their ideas in this manner. FutureWorks also plans to develop customer satisfaction surveys to solicit comprehensive, formal input from its employee customers.

FutureWorks staff reported that current communication protocols and day-to-day procedures relative to state-level agencies and the Career Center Office were generally effective, and had improved over time. One area of concern early on was that Career Center Office staff negotiated agreements with different state agencies on behalf of REBs and the career centers that these regional entities had not been party to but were expected to abide by.[10]

FutureWorks, its "sister" career center--Career Point, and the Hampden County REB have also developed frequent and substantive communication and high-quality working relationships. As a result of the communication among these entities, the roles of the various organizations are clear and all three exhibit varying levels of interdependence. Despite the element of competition built into the relationship between the two regional career center operators, these two entities have developed complementary functions, and have even developed a coordinated programmatic response to serving individuals affected by welfare reform.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

The MassJobs Council's Career Center Office is the entity that currently provides Regional Employment Boards and One-Stop career centers with operating funds, based on a combination of federal One-Stop implementation grant funds and funds allocated by state agencies through Interdepartmental Service Agreements (ISAs). The state's goal is to transition the emerging career centers as soon as possible from implementation grant support to ongoing federal workforce development funds supplemented by revenues generated at the local level through fees charged to career center customers for enhanced services.

During the initial stage of career center planning, four REBs were selected, through a competitive process, to receive federal One-Stop implementation grant funds to support their initial system building efforts. The state had originally anticipated that federal workforce development block grants would provide an integrated funding stream to support the operation of the One-Stop career centers. When federal legislation was not enacted, the state Career Center Office took on the challenge of developing Interdepartmental Service Agreements (ISAs) with partner state agencies to support the statewide One Stop initiative in Massachusetts.

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[10] One example was an agreement made by the Career Center Office that One-Stop career centers would provide reemployment services to UI profilees under the Worker Profiling Reemployment Services program. Prior to being provided by the Career Center Office with instructions for conducting UI profiling, REBs and career centers had not been aware that they would be responsible for providing this service.

The partner agencies with which ISAs have been negotiated include: the Department of Employment and Training, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the Department of Education, Massachusetts Industrial Services Program, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Council, and the Commission for the Blind. With the exception of support from the JTPA Title II and Title III programs—which flow through designated local grantees—all funds supporting the career center initiative are negotiated at the state level and flow through the state Career Center Office. The Career Center Office then reimburses both the Regional Employment Boards and the career centers for service provided.

According to the state's planned expenditures for FY 97, the FutureWorks Career Center was expected to be reimbursed for $1.8 million in operating expenses, of which 46% were to be provided by an Interagency Services Agreement with the Department of Employment and Training, whose local field offices were replaced by the two Hampden County career centers. The details of career center financing are largely transparent to the individual career center operators. However, along with the transfer of funds from some agencies have come responsibilities for program-based reporting. REBs and career centers had not anticipated that they would still be subject to state-level reporting requirements for individual funding streams. Staff expressed frustration over this issue, indicating that their time would be much better spent assisting customers than reporting information about them.

Another challenge in the implementation of integrated funded has been the exclusion of JTPA funds and services from career center operations. Although the state Career Center Office had anticipated that JTPA funds would flow through the centers, the state did not mandate the participation of the JTPA entities in the state of Massachusetts' career center initiative. During the first year of career center operations, JTPA funds were not available for the support of career center operations because two-year JTPA service providers contracts were already in effect. However, JTPA service delivery areas have not rushed to put themselves out of business by committing JTPA funds to the One-Stop career centers.

In Hampden County, FutureWorks maintains a mutual referral relationship with the local JTPA entity, which will continue to receive JTPA funds for at least the next fiscal year. Planning for the reallocation of JTPA funding to support the career centers has met with tremendous resistance. Whether JTPA funds will flow through FutureWorks, or the other career centers after the next fiscal year is uncertain.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Physical Facilities

The FutureWorks Career Center is located in downtown Springfield, directly across the street from Springfield Technical and Community College. Although the complex in which FutureWorks is housed is the old Springfield Armory, most residents know the area as the former location of Digital Equipment Corporation, formerly a large employer in the area. Staff and customers remarked that the location "could not be better." The Center is accessible via almost any bus route is and within walking distance of schools and a number of social service providers. There is ample parking on the grounds.

The office space is considerable. With over 18,000 square feet of office space, the facility occupied by FutureWorks is currently the largest career center in Massachusetts. The facility is also ideal for the needs of FutureWorks staff. There is sufficient privacy to ensure comfort for customers receiving one-on-one Center services such as counseling, yet the high-energy and activity level in the Center ensures that a staff person is always visible and willing to answer customer inquiries. A large conference space also enables staff to hold job fairs on-site and host large orientation sessions. Although customers must take the elevator to the third floor of the building, the signage, both inside and outside of the building, is adequate to ensure that customers can find the Center.

As soon as customers step off of the elevator, they are greeted by the reception-area staff and asked if they have visited the center before. Center members for whom this is a return visit generally have pre-scheduled appointments and know where to go. As they enter the facility, members "swipe" their membership cards through a reader and punch in a code to indicate the nature of their visit that day. New visitors are invited to take part in an orientation to the Center. Two orientation sessions are held every day—at 10:00 a.m. and at 2:00 p.m. Additional orientations are scheduled for Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings to meet the needs of students or individuals who are employed, but may be seeking new opportunities.

Orientation sessions include a tour of the facilities and a brief introduction to the services provided at the center. Orientations are held in one of two large classrooms; seats are arranged in a circle. The orientation leader introduces himself or herself and then asks participants to introduce themselves. The leader takes notes on participants who might be eligible for categorically-funded programs and forwards this information to the staff assigned to collect the Center membership applications at the conclusion of the session. Customers are then invited to walk around, use the resource room, or ask any questions they might have.

Staff cubicles are arranged to represent a compromise between the need for privacy and the desire for an open environment. All staff are visible, but the short three-walled cubicles provide some protection from the commotion created as members walk by the cubicles on their way to seminars, computer courses, or other appointments. The resource room is large and includes access to the following: 14 small cubicles that serve as individual telephone stations; 7 larger cubicles that contain computer workstations for resume and cover-letter preparation; 12 computer terminals with access to the Internet; two TV/VCRs; and a library that contains tables and chairs, and shelves stocked with numerous books, pamphlets, and brochures related to workforce development. The walls contain job postings by area of interest that are color-coded to indicate the month the job was posted. The center also contains 12 other computer terminals in a classroom used for instruction in basic computer skills. All computers are equipped with *Windows 95*, and a wide array of common office software packages.

A large room is available for job fairs or receptions; FutureWorks has used it frequently since the Center opened. Several smaller rooms serve as on-site interview or assessment rooms for employers. Although neat, clean, and well-organized, the facilities are not "sterile." The high ceilings and conspicuous red pipes and vents render the atmosphere less formal than traditional office space, and more comfortable for a greater variety of customers.

The Executive Director's office is the most visible office in the entire Center. Directly across from the reception area, the Director maintains a visible presence in the

Center. Of the customers interviewed at the Center, more than half indicated that they had met her or seen her walking around the center. When not engaged in meetings, the Director keeps her door open and encourages Center members to use the suggestion box attached to her office. "These are your tax dollars at work," she notes repeatedly, "we need you to tell us how best to use them."

Staffing Arrangements

The 27 staff employed by ETI to staff the FutureWorks Career Center are assigned to four functional divisions, as follows:

- Eight *Career Development Services* staff are responsible for assisting individual customers with core and enhanced services. As described later in this profile, core services include services available to members of the general public free of charge; enhanced services include services available to customers eligible for specific categorical programs or services for which a user fee is charged. Career development services staff generally have graduate degrees in counseling. They coordinate closely with Employer Services staff.
- Eight *Employer Services* staff are responsible for assisting employer customers with core and enhanced services. These staff, many of whom were selected for their experience in the private sector or working with employers, coordinate closely with Community Relations and Marketing staff.
- Nine *MIS/Administrative Services* staff are responsible for maintaining and managing the MIS systems, the physical facilities, and the resource room. Administrative services staff also provide word processing services to FutureWorks staff and customers.
- Two *Community Relations and Marketing Services* staff are responsible for outreach, recruitment, public relations and the creation and maintenance of "interagency linkages," which include partnerships between FutureWorks and other local service providers, training institutions, and economic development entities.

FutureWorks is managed by an Executive Director and a team comprised of the managers of the four functional divisions. If and when JTPA funds are added to the "integrated funding stream" supporting Center operations, additional divisions may need to be added to support expanded FutureWorks services. At the time of the evaluation site visit, all staff working in the FutureWorks Career Center were employees of ETI, with the exception of an outstationed Veterans' Employment Services Representative—who was employed by the Department of Employment and

Training. Many of these staff were hired by ETI for FutureWorks Career Center because of their considerable experience in ES/UI or JTPA programs. However, since FutureWorks does not have co-located representatives from other agencies or programs, the organization of cross-agency staff along functional lines has not been an issue.[11]

Capacity Building

Capacity building efforts with regard to local implementation of the career center initiative in Massachusetts have been undertaken by the regional level (the REBs) as well as at the level of career center staff.

Regional Employment Boards. As the career center initiative has evolved, the roles played by Regional Employment Boards have changed dramatically. Regional Employment Boards are granted considerable autonomy in designing and overseeing the career centers within their jurisdictions. To ensure a basic level of consistency across regions, however, the state Career Center Office has assisted the REBs in the planning and start-up of the career center system. For example, Career Center Office staff have provided training and technical assistance on specific procedures and topics common to all centers, such as management information systems and reporting issues. In addition, the Career Center Office has sponsored full-day, comprehensive technical assistance workshops for REBs involved in One-Stop planning or implementation during both the first and second years of the One-Stop implementation grant.

FutureWorks Career Center. In local One-Stop sites that represent coalitions of different partner agencies, team-building and training to meld diverse work "cultures" have emerged as important issues. At FutureWorks, however, staff are already part of the same organization and team-work is already an essential component of the corporate culture. There is little sense of hierarchy at FutureWorks. Rather, as noted by one FutureWorks career specialist, staff share a clear commitment to "doing whatever needs to be done to accomplish the Center's mission—whether it's part of [an individual staff member's] job description or not."

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[11] Since the site visit, plans have been made to co-locate staff from other agencies at the FutureWorks Center. Staff from the JTPA Title III substate entity are expected to be co-located at the Center starting in March 1997. It is possible that staff working for the JTPA Title II administrative entity will also be co-located at the Center in the future. This will dramatically change the integrated staffing design originally envisioned by the REB and planned by ETI as the chartered Center operator.

The staff of FutureWorks is also well-versed in the new paradigm of the high-performance workplace. FutureWorks managers and staff have implemented numerous high-performance practices in their own operations and are well-equipped to provide customers with high quality information about careers and labor markets and assist them in making important career decisions. Participation on the "No Excuses" Team (a cross-functional, rotating group of six FutureWorks staff charged with maintaining customer focus, designing mechanisms for customer feedback, and insuring that such feedback informs the continuous improvement process) provides staff with the opportunity to practice their high-performance work skills to improve customer services.

One capacity-building challenge with which FutureWorks staff have had to contend during the initial start-up phase has been deciding what training is needed immediately and what training is important over the long term. Staff training on all the FutureWorks technology systems received early emphasis. There are several reasons for this emphasis. First, FutureWorks' customer service orientation requires that staff be able to use the newest technology in serving customers. Staff indicated that employer customers think that FutureWorks "means business" because staff can utilize the newest technology. For individual customers, staff familiarity with technology means that customers can get assistance in typing a cover letter on Word for Windows '95 or looking for jobs on the Internet. Second, staff familiarity with technology is part of a FutureWorks strategy to build a flexible staff. If all staff are trained in the use of the Center's basic systems, then staff can easily float to stations other than their regular assigned job to accommodate fluctuations in customer flow. Finally, when staff members know how to use the Center's technology, they can apply the technology-based tools to improve Center services, policies, procedures or protocols, or develop new services.

Training on additional topics (e.g., diversity, local labor markets, customer service) is also seen as important by *FutureWorks* managers and staff. However, managers indicated that prioritizing and finding time for such training was sometimes a challenge, given the high volume of customers requesting service from the Center on an ongoing basis. At the time of the site visit, all FutureWorks staff had completed both diversity and customer-service/empowerment training. Moreover, all staff had participated in each of the workshops available to FutureWorks customers, including the orientation and career seminars, to enhance their ability to provide good information about these programs to their members.

Using a "train the trainer" model, FutureWorks staff members who are familiar with particular categorical programs are training all staff in program eligibility requirements, and procedures. All FutureWorks staff are responsible for familiarizing themselves with federal and state categorical programs, but staff members with high levels of expertise serve as "specialists" and train other staff in the details of these programs.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The major components of the FutureWorks information systems infrastructure include (1) a customer information and tracking system; (2) an employer tracking system; (3) a system for collecting data on center usage; (4) job search systems; and (5) a system for tracking customer satisfaction. Although the state Career Center Office has been working on developing a system to extract career center data for use in a statewide summary reporting system, the current MIS systems in use at the FutureWorks Center have been initiated at the local level. The systems used primarily by Center managers are described briefly below. The job search systems and other customer-oriented services are described in the following section.

- FutureWorks maintains an in-house comprehensive customer information system supported by *Client IMS*, a DOS-driven database that manages information about individual members and determines program eligibility. The program also has interface capability with the data management systems operated by the state of Massachusetts.
- Another database holds information about employer members. This system, *Account Manager*, tracks information about employers' use of center services and any financial transactions that occur between FutureWorks and employer members.
- The *bar code/swipe system* of individual membership cards tracks overall aggregate center usage and, through software developed internally, feeds this aggregate information into the individual case files of center members. This way, when members use the resource room or visit the center for self-driven services, their activity is reflected in their individual case files. Moreover, since the system uses codes to determine the use of individual services, FutureWorks can track the demand for its various services it offers, as well as the overall traffic in the Center.

Staff at FutureWorks identified several challenges with regard to the development and maintenance of effective and efficient information systems. First, since customer service is the priority of all center staff, FutureWorks is attempting to minimize time spent on data collection and reporting. The model FutureWorks has in mind is a system that would have access to all relevant data with "just-in-time" data manipulation and analysis. The idea is that all data on customers, services, and outcomes would be collected in a central location (file server) with tailored reports generated as needed to meet the needs of different staff members or funding sources. However, since data are currently collected through a variety of different systems that are not necessarily compatible with one another, staff face a challenge in establishing an interface that will permit data transfer across systems.

Second, the data collected must meet the needs of a wide range of users. The MassJobs Council, the REB, and different staff members within FutureWorks all have different data needs. At the same time, FutureWorks is resistant to collecting data that are not absolutely necessary. Determining the universe of data that is required to meet the needs of multiple users while avoiding extraneous data collection is a difficult balance for FutureWorks staff to negotiate.

Finally, the MIS staff members, although extremely technically competent and excited about learning and implementing new automated systems and procedures, are wary of "technology overkill." As the manager of Information Systems noted, "technology is not the answer to every problem—some objectives are better accomplished using manual procedures. . . it's our job to establish a balance between the two."

FutureWorks looks to the state—the MassJobs Council and the Career Center Office—for assistance in establishing an efficient system to fulfill reporting requirements. Although the state is working with a high-technology consulting firm to develop a data extraction system that will collect data from the Career Centers with minimal burden on center staff, this system was not yet operational at the time of our visit. In this interim period, center staff have been working with the Career Center Office to identify reporting requirements and develop strategies to fulfill such requirements.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

As part of an emerging statewide network of career centers, FutureWorks has access to customer-oriented LMI products developed at the state level and to labor market information developed by state-level agencies, as well as to products it has developed internally. Thus, in developing its menu of labor marketing information products to offer its customers, FutureWorks is able to build upon a strong foundation developed by the MassJobs Council, the Career Center Office, and state-level agencies.

The MassJobs Council Career Center Office has created a World Wide Web page available to anyone with Internet access. This web page contains links to other government agencies, including the state Division of Employment and Training, as well as to other publicly-funded employment resources such as America's Job Bank and the home pages of FutureWorks and other One-Stop career centers. The MassJobs Council's web page is a marketing and information tool that describes the state's new employment and training system and instructs users how to access the system either in-person or from their home computers. The texts of the MassJobs Council's Annual Reports from 1994 to the present can also be accessed through the MassJobs Council home page. Much of this text is devoted to explaining the "new paradigm" of workforce development services.

Through the MassJobs Council's web page, Center customers may also gain access to:

- On-line employment databases maintained by each individual career center as well as a statewide and national database available through *America's Job Bank*.
- *WinSearch*, a database comprised of current job announcements, which allows users to search job announcements contained in the system using key words.

Automated labor-exchange tools developed or purchased by FutureWorks supplement the information systems available on the MassJobs Council's Internet web page and support the Center's labor exchange function. *Resume Express* is a program currently under development that will allow FutureWorks to send disks or transfer electronic files to employers who will then be able to scan/search them for appropriate candidates. Locally-initiated automated products also include an on-line listing of posted jobs maintained by FutureWorks, which is linked to the FutureWorks Web Page and can be accessed through the computers available in the resource room. The same job listing are posted on the bulletin boards in the Center. The boards are industry- or field-specific and the job-listings are posted on color-coded cards indicating the month in which the job order was placed. FutureWorks staff have also compiled several three-ring binders containing the World Wide Web sites of various employment bulletin boards. Members are encouraged to search through the binders and then tap into these home pages through the Internet. Assistance is available to members who are interested in posting resumes on-line or sending them directly to employers over the Internet.

In the FutureWorks Career Center, national, state, and local labor market information can also be accessed through more traditional paper sources available in the Center's resource room. There, job-seekers and employers will find the career resources library. The library holds a wide array of reference materials, including tools for career exploration, instructional material, guides to educational opportunities, and information about other public agencies and programs. A separate video library contains both informational and instructional videos for member use. A communication board contains recent articles on employment/training strategies of local labor markets, as well as information about local job fairs, seminars or community events of interest to job seekers and employers.

Several CD-based products also offer relevant labor market information. *Career Search* contains information about local businesses by name or by industry. *Job Analyzer* provides information about specific careers, including skill requirements, wage information, and projected growth. *CompuSelect* contains information and articles about job opportunities and firms in the computer technology industry. *Executive Advisor* is a self-driven career assessment package.

FutureWorks customers with whom we met during the evaluation site visit expressed great enthusiasm for many of these products, particularly the Internet access and various guides identifying job opportunities "on the Net." The Center plans to maintain its large paper bulletin boards containing job listings identical to those available in electronic format. This enhances customer choice and provides first-time visitors with information about the job opportunities available without overwhelming them by introducing them to so many resources all at once. Resource room staff indicated that the bulletin boards also double as a marketing tool for the high-tech job search tools available through the Center: as Center members arrive for a tour or for specific services, they often peruse the boards on their way in or out, and return later to learn more about a specific job—at that time, staff will introduce them to the electronic labor market information and job search tools.

Marketing

The FutureWorks staff has engaged in substantial community outreach to service providers, training institutions and community-based organizations. Staff members have also been very active in community economic development initiatives. However, because of all of the publicity generated by the controversy over the state's "competitive model," FutureWorks has not had to conduct extensive marketing—it has drawn large numbers of visitors as a result of state or local media coverage or simply by word of mouth.

FutureWorks is, however, in the process of developing marketing strategies to reach populations not traditionally served by the public employment and training system, such as students in grades K-12 (through the state's school-to-work initiative). For marketing materials, FutureWorks has used the state's One-Stop brochures and press releases. In addition, staff have developed FutureWork's own marketing tools for local use, including a listing of employer services targeted to local employers and monthly calendars describing Center activities.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

Core services currently available to all customers of FutureWorks Career Center include the following:

- *An orientation to the Center.* Two orientation sessions are held every day—at 10:00 a.m. and at 2:00 p.m. Additional orientations are scheduled for Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings to meet the needs of students or individuals who are employed.
- *Job listings and job matching services* may be accessed from computers in the Center's resource room or from any computer with the ability to connect to the Internet. All career centers in the state of Massachusetts share job listings with the state Career Center Office. Customers can access these listings over the Internet through the state's Web site or the Web pages of the local sites. Paper bulletin boards at FutureWorks also display local job listings. Members may also access *America's Job Bank* and numerous on-line labor exchange database through the Internet.

- *Access to Resume Express* (ETI's "talent bank") and scanning service are also available without charge to all Center customers.
- *Self-service and assisted access to labor market information* are available on-site in the form of written and automated information in the resource room and through remote access to the state's Web site.
- *Self-service career planning activities* within the resource room include a variety of CD-based programs for career exploration or assessment, software to practice and self-certify skills in typing and 10-key data entry, career planning videos, and information about providers of specific training programs and other supportive services.
- *Self-service job search training* activities within the resource room include videos, paper and electronic job search materials, and resume preparation assistance (both computer-based and assisted by resource room staff).
- *Referrals to available community services*, including training resources, and supportive services are provided by reception staff, career specialists, and through written materials in the resource room.
- *Assessment.* All customers are encouraged to develop an individual customer action plan with the assistance of an assigned career specialist. The plan is informed by a basic assessment of individual needs and skills.
- *A 15-hour on-site computer basics class* is offered free-of-charge. The class lasts three hours per day for one week and teaches basic keyboard/mouse skills. It prepares members to use the self-driven services available in the resource room.
- A comprehensive *Career Transition Seminar* is available to all customers. This seminar is a two-day orientation to careers and job search techniques in the 90s. It includes seven instructional modules, requiring both team and individual activities. This seminar is taught by a local instructor who works for FutureWorks on a contract basis.
- *Other specialized seminars and strategy sessions* on a range of topics to support reemployment are available to all customers.
- Organized *job search teams* are also available to all customers. These teams may be targeted to individuals facing specific barriers. The Over-the-Hill club, for example, is a group of older job-seekers who meet to share leads and discuss job-search strategies.

Although the development of fee-based services is a clear goal for the Center, enhanced services to individual customers were not emphasized during the first year of operations. Enhanced or fee-based services include the following:

- The Center offers *specialized assessment*, such as the Myers-Briggs personality test or evaluation and certification for specific skill-sets to customers who want to pay for such services, agencies who refer their clients on a fee-for-service basis, or employers who want to purchase such services on behalf of job applicants or current employees.
- *Success skills training*, rooted in the SCANS skills, is oriented to customers who are changing careers entirely or are employed by firms that are implementing team-based management practices.
- On-site basic skills, ESL, and ABE/GED training are available as dictated by customer demand.
- More advanced computer literacy courses can build upon the basic skills instruction offered to all FutureWorks members.

FutureWorks has also developed a number of formal strategies for assisting members who are likely to require more intensive services, such as recipients of transitional assistance to needy families. At the time of the site visit, however, these services had not yet been developed. Staff also envision some changes in the services provided if JTPA funds are reallocated to the career centers during the next fiscal year.

One group which the Center has a special mandate to serve is UI profilees. After negotiating its charter with the Regional Employment Board, FutureWorks found out that it would be responsible for providing services under the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program. The Center is currently wrestling with how to provide services to UI profilees. Although staff are committed to providing the types of services members require, they want to avoid the stigma of associating particular customers with categorical programs. Currently, UI profilees are contacted through the mail. They are requested to call the center and ask for a particular (fictitious) individual. The use of this fictitious name upon calling identifies the customers to reception staff as UI profilees. Thus, without any "labeling" of these customers as participants in a particular program, Center staff assist UI profilees in receiving appropriate services.

Services for Employer Customers

FutureWorks has also developed a comprehensive menu of services for employer customers. Employer services fall into two different categories: core services, which are available free of charge to all employers and enhanced services available on a fee-for-service basis. Services are as follows:

Core services include:

- Developing a customized employer services plan;
- Placing job orders;
- Screening and referral of candidates;
- Access to electronic databases of job-seekers; and
- Information on workforce development programs.

Enhanced services include:

- Specialized recruitment and screening;
- Testing, assessment, checking references of job applicants;
- Assistance with downsizing, including the provision of outplacement services to laid of workers;
- Success skills training for incumbent workers;
- Brokering of public financial incentives;
- Job task analysis;
- Seminars on workforce issues;
- Training in customized PC applications; and
- Consulting on human resources management issues.

FutureWorks experienced a high demand from employers both for core and enhanced services during its first year of operations. At the time of the evaluation site visit, the Center had held numerous job fairs and had performed specialized screening and testing of nearly 2,000 job seekers for local employers. FutureWorks expects the demand for these services to increase as more employers become aware of their availability.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

As a part of the local site evaluation process, conversations were held with a wide range of individual and employers customers using Center services Among the individual customers we talked with (including dislocated workers from professional backgrounds, previous customers of the ES/UI system, and minority youth with no formal training beyond high school) most expressed a high degree of enthusiasm about Center services. A number of customers expressed astonishment that so many of the services available at FutureWorks were available free of charge; several were delighted that their tax dollars were supporting services that they found useful. The younger customers also indicated that the services had been helpful and were particularly pleased with the information they had been able to access over the Internet.

Customers agreed that the greatest resource at the FutureWorks is the staff. Respondents expressed high praise for the counselors, the "teachers" (seminar leaders and the computer course instructor), and particularly, the resource room staff, who regularly help members navigate their way through resources available to them on a self-serve basis and assist them in receiving other services in which they might be interested. Despite the diverse clientele using the Center's resources, no one expressed discomfort or intimidation with regard to the Center's atmosphere or the diversity of Center customers.[12] One middle-aged dislocated white-collar professional noted that a service like FutureWorks should be available to everyone. He expressed delight that "such a nice place" was serving people "who really need the assistance" and also could accommodate individuals who preferred to search for work independently.

Employers

During the local site visit, we also contacted several employers who had used FutureWorks services, ranging from small independent businesses to large international firms. Without exception, employers expressed great enthusiasm for FutureWorks, responding that the services they received were "outstanding" and "excellent." Several respondents spoke first on behalf of the firms they represented, and then offered their personal opinions, as taxpayers, about the services and the staff at FutureWorks. One such respondent indicated that she was delighted that there was "finally one quality resource for both job-seekers and employers," and that she felt that her tax dollars were "being put to good use in supporting the career center concept."

Some of the specific comments made by employers reveal the capacity of FutureWorks to provide relevant high-quality services to employers. Employers stated:

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[12] Only one individual expressed frustration with his experiences. A long-time recipient of public assistance, he was dismayed that center staff encouraged him to attend the job search workshop before he received individualized assistance with specific job search activities.

- "FutureWorks understands that business needs support with human resource issues."
- "They do not send us anyone who isn't qualified."
- "They are well-organized and they always return our calls."

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Influences on Local Design. Although the state of Massachusetts had already embarked upon the transformation of its public employment and training system before receiving the federal One-Stop implementation grant, the grant was viewed as an important asset by advocates of the reform effort. Particularly in light of the political controversy that arose around the career center initiative, respondents at many levels indicated that the initiative would have been interrupted statewide in the absence of federal funding support.

The "competitive model" of service delivery adopted by the state and embraced by the Hampden County Regional Employment Board was another important influence on the local design of services in Hampden County and at the FutureWorks Career Center. The competitive model espoused at the state and regional level established the parameters under which local centers were required to operate. As a result, the experiences of FutureWorks, and its sister center CareerPoint have the potential to inform the future development of the "competitive model" in the state of Massachusetts and beyond.

A third important influence was rooted in ETI's experience in operating similar Centers. Although the FutureWorks management and staff had not managed a comprehensive service center prior to FutureWorks, they had managed numerous "One-Stop" centers serving dislocated workers. Staff realized the difficulty of establishing a universal One-Stop center in an environment that still required categorical program-based reporting and eligibility procedures and appeared prepared to meet this challenge.

Finally, public support has been a key influence in keeping the centers, including FutureWorks, operational during a period of intense political opposition. This support has resulted in a broad-based dialogue about community employment and training needs, which has, in turn, informed the continuous improvement process inside FutureWorks and its "sister" center, CareerPoint. It may ultimately be such support that prompts the decision to integrate JTPA funds in the centers at some point in the future.

Lessons Learned. The services available at FutureWorks have been extremely well-received among job-seekers and employers in Hampden County. Among the strengths consistently noted are: expertise and enthusiasm on the part of Center staff; access to high-tech job search tools; and overall quality of services and facilities. Particularly notable achievements of the FutureWorks Career Center are the high level of integration of services and the orientation of services around meeting customer needs and achieving a high level of customer satisfaction. Staff were visibly motivated by their work, and extremely responsive to customer needs. When FutureWorks staff were asked about their own job satisfaction, without exception they responded enthusiastically. Staff repeatedly stated, "Our managers model the empathy, enthusiasm, and professionalism that they want to see throughout the center—it's contagious."

The challenges FutureWorks faces in its efforts to continue to provide high quality employment and training services to county residents, however, are formidable. At the state level, maintaining support in the legislature for the career center initiative stands out as a serious challenge. Several other Regional Employment Boards have already slowed their progress or taken steps backward because of the political pressure they face.[13] Staff at FutureWorks stressed state leadership and commitment to the competitive model as crucial in transforming workforce development services in Massachusetts and continuing to improve them over time. State-level planners have implemented the One-Stop initiative in a more piecemeal fashion than they had originally anticipated. As a result, the state has had to maintain separate employment and training systems—one for the regions that have adopted MassJobs Council's One-Stop career center vision, and one for the regions that have not yet participated in the One-Stop initiative. The MassJobs Council and staff at the Career Center Office are concerned that the absence of statewide buy-in will compromise the success of the One-

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[13] Some local areas have retreated from the competitive approach altogether. In Berkshire County, for example, center operators were selected and notified of their selection when the local REB nullified the entire bidding process and retained the public agencies as service providers with no major change in workforce development services or their delivery. This action virtually removed the county from participation in the state's One-Stop initiative.

Stop initiative in participating regions, and undermine the marketing of the career center model to new areas in the state.

Another difficulty that needs to be worked out among the MassJobs Council's Career Center Office, the Regional Employment Boards, and the One-Stop career center operators is the need to agree on the extent to which the career centers are responsible for program-based procedures and reporting. In negotiating Interdepartmental Services Agreements order to create an integrated funding stream for the One-Stop initiative, the Career Center Office promised that career centers would take on responsibilities they had never planned to shoulder.

Within FutureWorks, the coming year is expected to provide the serious challenge of serving large numbers of community residents who may not be job ready, as a result of welfare reform. Staff are currently developing a strategic plan and partnerships to address this need. Staff will also need to strategize about the means by which JTPA funds will be integrated into the Center's operations, if these funds become available, or about how to form a more effective partnership with the local JTPA entity in the absence of the transfer of such funds.

APPENDIX O

STATE OF MINNESOTA

One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During September 1996

STATE OF MINNESOTA
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 1/28/97

STATE OF MINNESOTA

One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The state of Minnesota has a comprehensive strategy for One-Stop development designed both to improve service to employers and job seekers and to consolidate the delivery of workforce development services through co-location of relevant agencies. This strategy has developed out of a long history of program and agency consolidation. The administrator of the state's One-Stop implementation grant, the Minnesota Department of Economic Security (MDES), was created in 1977 as a result of the merging of the Department of Employment Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Governor's Manpower office, and the Economic Opportunity Office.[1] In 1985, State Services for the Blind was added.

Beginning in 1986, MDES began to encourage physical co-location of Job Service and Reemployment Insurance[2] (JS/UI) Offices with other local providers of county, state, and federally administered workforce development programs. Thus, even prior to One-Stop Implementation, of the fifty JS/UI offices in the state, twenty were co-located with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), sixteen with JTPA service delivery areas, and seven with both DRS and State Services for the Blind. Twenty-three JS/UI offices also were contracted by JTPA service delivery areas to deliver all or part of their Dislocated Worker programs. As a result of this decade-long move toward co-location and inter-agency cooperation, many local Workforce Centers are well positioned to begin further integration of services to customers.

The state has enthusiastically embraced the concept of integrated service delivery for workforce development programs. In the introduction to its One-Stop proposal, MDES described Minnesota's proposed One-Stop approach as an opportunity to reform a workforce system based on "crisis intervention" and mired in a "complex, rigid, and incomprehensible mass of programs, laws, rules, regulations, and eligibility requirements that is riddled with duplications, gaps, and inefficiencies." Minnesota's One-Stop vision is to provide a skilled workforce through an "accessible, integrated employment and training system" by undertaking the following:

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[1] The Department was called the Department of Jobs and Training from 1985-1994. Its current name, Minnesota Department of Economic Security (MDES) is used throughout this document, regardless of the time period.

[2] Unemployment Insurance has been called Reemployment Insurance in Minnesota since 1994. We use the more familiar "UI" designation throughout this profile.

- emphasizing quality outcomes and satisfaction of both job-seekers and employer customers;
- providing tools for customers to make informed career, training, and hiring choices through assessment and LMI;
- supporting customer service through the establishment of an information system that promotes sharing of information and maximization of resources;
- replicating and expanding on already-existing innovations for comprehensive and high-quality training services;
- including all Minnesotans in the effort to enhance the state's position in the "global marketplace."

The state's One-Stop vision is based on a consistent focus on customer needs, a recognition that employers are key customers, a goal of greater co-location and systems integration, and a strong emphasis on "getting the One-Stop message out" to both internal and external audiences. State respondents say they hope to defuse many of the potential "turf" issues associated with One-Stop implementation by focusing on what will work best for customers of the workforce development system.

The major thrust of the Minnesota One-Stop initiative is to encourage all of the various programs administered by MDES at the state level to co-locate and eventually integrate their operations at about 50 One-Stop centers—called Workforce Centers—throughout the state. Although a gradual roll-out of One-Stop centers was proposed in the Implementation Grant application, a more ambitious schedule has evolved since the grant became effective in July of 1995. Because state officials were pleased with the implementation of the initial One-Stops, a decision was made to speed up the implementation schedule. By the end of the first grant year, a total of 8 full-service Workforce Centers had been opened. It is expected that 42 centers (about 80% of the planned state total) will be operational by the end of the second grant year.

There are several contextual variables that have influenced One-Stop planning, design, and implementation in Minnesota. These include (1) recent low unemployment rates; (2) a history of promoting co-location of federal, state, and local workforce services even before the One-Stop initiative; and (3) a clear view of the appropriate balance between state guidance and local discretion; and (4) strong support and involvement from top workforce development agency administrators.

- *Unemployment rates are currently low throughout the state.* Current unemployment rates in the state are about 3.2%, and have been around 3% for more than a year, compared to rates of 5-6% in the 1980s. As a result of tight labor markets, employers are having difficulty finding new workers. Thus, employers are considered a very important customer of the workforce development system.
- *Prior to the federal One-Stop initiative, Minnesota had begun to promote the co-location of its state Job Service/Reemployment Insurance offices with other providers of federal, state, and local workforce services.* The One-Stop initiative dovetailed nicely with this prior trend and extended its focus from the consolidation of physical facilities to the integration of services as a response to reduced overall budgets.
- *The Minnesota One-Stop initiative is based on a guiding principle of "state guidance and local implementation."* Although the appropriate boundaries of state guidance and the limits of local discretion are still under discussion, the state's philosophy of offering guidance to local areas by setting minimum criteria for certification of local One-Stop centers has been influential. According to this philosophy, local areas should be free to develop their own One-Stop systems in response to local needs, within the broad parameters established by the state.
- *Top state workforce development administrators have been very active in promoting the One-Stop vision both to internal governmental audiences and to the general public.* In 1996 MDES Commissioners made a high-visibility tour of the state to promote One-Stop centers. At local sites, these state officials met with local One-Stop partners, elected officials, and members of the public to address local questions and concerns about the state's plans. The involvement by top-level officials has increased the visibility of the One-Stop initiative throughout the state and has been influential in encouraging local actors to assign high priority to the initiative.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

In Minnesota, the One-Stop initiative is viewed as the unifying theme or central core of all state planning, administration, and oversight of public workforce development services. One-Stop policy development and oversight at the state level is provided by the state's Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) which is called the Governor's Workforce Development Council. The Governor's Council, established in 1995 to replace the Governor's Job Training Council, is composed of 32 members, at least half of whom are nominated by local area representatives. State representatives include the Commissioners of the Minnesota Department of Economic Security (MDES), the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning (CFL), the Minnesota Department of Human Services (MDHS), and the Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development (MDTED), and the Chancellor of the Higher Education Board. Additional members represent the business community, labor organizations, and individual educational institutions.

The Governor's Council is responsible for (1) coordinating the development, implementation, and evaluation of the state's education and employment transition services, including youth services; (2) making recommendations for establishing an integrated system for education, service-learning, and work skills development; (3) advising the Governor on JTPA, Carl Perkins Vocational Education, National and Community Services, Adult Education, Wagner-Peyser, JOBS, Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET), Welfare-to-Work, School-to-Work, and other federal and state programs related to workforce development; and (4) establishing performance standards.

To coordinate and administer development of the One-Stop system—called the "Workforce Center System"—a Workforce Center Systems office was created within the Department of Economic Security in 1995. This office is responsible for administering the federal One-Stop grant, overseeing the development and expansion of One-Stop centers throughout the state, and coordinating the activities of a Workforce Center "Issues Team," which serves as a vehicle for identifying and resolving issues related to One-Stop implementation. Although the Department of Economic Security (MDES) takes the lead in the development of the Workforce Center System, other state agencies are partnering in this endeavor. These agencies include the Department of Human Services and the Department of Children, Families, and Learning.

Services to welfare recipients have always been an important consideration in planning the state's One-Stop system. Historically, DES has been a major service provider in the delivery of employment-related services to AFDC and state general assistance recipients through contracts with MDHS. MDES has been designated as the agency responsible for designing, evaluating, and monitoring the STRIDE program

(Minnesota's statewide JOBS program for AFDC recipients) and has participated in the Minnesota Work Readiness program, which is targeted to able-bodied males on general assistance. MDES is also designated as the "employment arm" of the state's welfare reform pilot project called MNJOBS, which provides transitional services to welfare recipients who begin working. However, it is not yet clear whether this relationship will be continued under welfare reform. MDHS, which has the lead role in welfare reform, retains the right to designate the agency responsible for providing welfare transition services.

Local One-Stop centers are also important partners within the state's vision for school-to-work services, although the collaboration between local One-Stop centers and local school-to-work delivery systems is "presumed," not mandated. A "School-to-Work Transition Council" has been established at the Governor's cabinet level to promote interagency coordination on school-to-work issues. The "Youth Development Committee" of the Council is jointly staffed by DES and CFL employees. As key partners in the school-to-work arena, six MDES regional labor market analysts (described further in the section on LMI below) give technical assistance to school-to-work partners by providing them with accurate and useful labor market information that they can use in internal planning efforts and provide to students.

State Framework for Local Governance

At the sub-state level, the 17 existing JTPA service delivery areas have been redesignated as "Workforce Service Areas" (WSAs). In each area, local elected officials are required to appoint a local "Workforce Council" that expands the membership of the existing Private Industry Council. Workforce Councils are the "first level of governance" of the local One-Stop systems and share with the local elected officials the responsibility for making local service delivery decisions to assure customer satisfaction. All Workforce Councils must be comprised of at least 51% private-sector representatives nominated by local business organizations such as the chambers of commerce, but their size and subcommittee structure may be determined at the local level.

Workforce Councils have four major roles:

- to designate administrative entities, grant recipients, and program operators for local Workforce Center services;[3]
- to plan for collaboration among local partners in on-site review and oversight of program performance;
- to identify local service priorities and target populations for supplemental programming;
- to assure non-duplication of services.

Thus, under the new system, the service provider function is becoming distinct from the function of overseeing and administering workforce development program funding. Although they are not prohibited from directly operating programs (11 of the 17 local Councils also provide direct services), in general, Workforce Councils are expected to provide the "vision" for local workforce development efforts, rather than day-to-day management of service delivery. The local Workforce Council and elected officials are responsible for developing a two-year plan specifying the grant recipient, administrative entity, and program operator(s) for Workforce Centers. In addition, each center, with input from local elected officials, is responsible for developing a plan for integration of services within the certification parameters specified by the state. Under the state's One-Stop planning and certification guidelines, these "local integration plans," which are to be developed jointly by local Job Service, JTPA, Rehabilitation Services, and State Services for the Blind staff, must be approved first by local Workforce Councils and then by MDES. Local integration plans identify the services provided to employers and job seekers, and whether these services are "universal" (open to a universal population), or "eligibility-based" (available based on categorical funding sources).[4]

In every service area, Job Service is automatically responsible for job development, job listings, and job matching for all One-Stop partner programs. How other job seeking services are provided is determined at the local level, and in accordance with local conditions. The degree to which some specialized job development functions are made available (including services available on a fee-for-service basis) can also be determined at the local level.

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[3] However, to protect state employees from competition or privatization, the state mandates that the state Job Service will continue to administer Wagner-Peyser, UI, and Veterans' Employment and Training programs.

[4] Terminology describing these services was changed in 1996 from "core" to "universal" services, and from "restricted" to "eligibility-based."

The Minnesota Workforce Center System has prepared a template for non-financial agreements to guide local partnership formation and specify the mutual responsibilities of local One-Stop partners within each workforce service area. For each local area, a "service delivery agreement" must be signed by the Workforce Council chair, local elected official(s), Job Service manager, and JTPA SDA director and approved by the MDES Commissioner. The service delivery agreement requires that "information on and initial access to" the following programs be provided at all proposed One-Stop Centers:

- Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser)
- Reemployment Insurance (UI)
- Veterans' Employment Services
- JTPA Title II
- Dislocated Worker Services
- Title V Older Worker Services
- STRIDE program for AFDC recipients (JOBS)
- Food Stamp Employment and Training Services
- Work Readiness Services for General Assistance Recipients
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- State Services for the Blind.

The state also requires that each One-Stop center provide a minimum set of universal services for jobseekers and employers (described below under *Design of the State One-Stop Initiative*). In addition to these required programs and services, MDES recommends that local service delivery agreements include a range of other employment, education, and economic development agencies and programs.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Communication and coordination among state and local One-Stop partners takes place through a variety of means including a cabinet level workforce council, an "Issues Team," the state's One-Stop office, and quarterly partners meetings. Communication among state agency One-Stop partners occurs at the Governor's Workforce Council. The hub of state- and local-level communication and coordination of activities is the Minnesota Workforce Center System Issues Team, which usually meets twice a month. Issues Team meetings typically include the MDES Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioners, the Director and Deputy Director of the Workforce Center System, and a cross-sectional representation of state and local Workforce Center partners. State-level One-Stop system development efforts are further coordinated by the Workforce Center Systems office which employs five full-time staff. Workforce Center staff administer the One-Stop grant and provide the guidance and leadership necessary to coordinate, review and monitor the accelerated implementation of One-Stops statewide.

Because system transformation at the local level is viewed as the first priority of the One-Stop initiative, promoting effective two-way communication between the state and local levels has received a strong emphasis. One objective of these efforts is to communicate effectively the state's One-Stop vision to the local representatives of the partner workforce development programs. The effectiveness of the state's communications efforts has been enhanced by the involvement of top agency officials in informational meetings. For example, to communicate the state's One-Stop vision to local partners, the state sponsors quarterly two-day-long "partners meetings" throughout the state, attended by the MDES Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Workforce Center System Director.

In addition to this regular forum for communication, these Commissioners also conducted a two-month long tour of all planned One-Stop areas in the summer of 1996, during which they made 42 presentations on the planned One-Stop Workforce Centers in 27 communities throughout the state. At each of the stops on the tour, local partners were asked to make presentations which detailed their local visions and progress in developing plans for their One-Stop Workforce Center and to address any obstacles to local area implementation that they had encountered. These meetings provided an opportunity for individuals to share their concerns and to pose questions about local integration. The tour was viewed as a great success in publicizing that Mdse.'s commitment to One-Stops came from the highest leadership levels.

Another objective of the state's One-Stop communication/coordination efforts has been to offer local partners an active consultation role in the development of state policies and procedures. Local representatives have been recruited for participation in the Issues Team subcommittees that developed recommendations for the state's One-Stop certification process. During the first year of One-Stop implementation, these sub-committees were charged with (1) identifying current issues in their respective One-Stop subject areas; (2) determining which issue were best handled by the state or by local areas; and (3) determining the respective state and local roles in planning and implementation.

Involvement of local partners in One-Stop planning and policy development has also been furthered by the quarterly partners meetings, which include local Job Service managers and SDA Directors. During quarterly partners meetings, attendees hear and comment on reports by members of Issues Team subcommittees on specific aspects of One-Stop implementation. Based on local input from these quarterly meetings, the state has developed a system of "benchmarks" for certifying Workforce Centers. Additional issues on which local partners have provided input during partners meetings include the role of local partners, the content of local integration plans, measurement of customer satisfaction, and the development of unified application procedures.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

Minnesota's One-Stop Implementation Grant application was approved by the U. S. Department of Labor in February 1995. As one of three "mezzanine" states, its first-year grant became effective July 1, 1995. The state has received a total of $6.2 million in first and second year grant funds.[5] Of the total two-year One-Stop implementation grant received to date, $2.2 million has been allocated to local areas to support implementation efforts and another $1.1 million has been divided among local areas on a formula basis to support field marketing.[6] Approximately $3 million was retained at the state level for these two years.

First-year local integration grants totaling $1.2 million and second-year grants totaling $1 million were allocated among 17 Workforce Service Areas on a formula basis, with a base grant of $20,000. The amounts received by local areas ranged from $29,000 to $172,000 during the first year and $26,000 to $138,000 in the second year. Local integration grants to Workforce Service Areas have been used to support technology infrastructure and computers, servers, printers, and signage for local

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[5] The first year One-Stop implementation grant was $2.7 million plus $1.1 million in LMI funds for a total of $3.8 million. The second year One-Stop implementation grant was $2.4 million. No second year LMI award has been made. All figures are rounded.

[6] $612,000 and 460,000 for years one and two respectively.

Centers. To accommodate co-location, some local sites also used funds for remodeling, including upgrading physical facilities to meet requirements for access by individuals with disabilities and purchasing compatible phone systems. Other local funds were used to cross-train staff.

In addition to allocating local integration grants to service areas, the state also provided local areas with funds to support One-Stop marketing efforts. Second year marketing grants to the 17 local sites ranged from $20,000 to $50,000. Local marketing funds have been used to support 33 part- or full-time marketing positions. "Marketers" have played an active role in arranging for the publication of newsletters and mailings to employers and job seekers as well as in planning local Workforce Center "open houses" and other outreach activities.

Of the $3 million retained by the state during first and second year One-Stop implementation, $590,000 covers staff costs associated with the administration of the Workforce Center System. State administrative funds support five full-time staff members charged with implementing the One-Stop system statewide. Of the remaining grant funding retained at the state level, $459,000 was allocated for statewide marketing efforts, $1 million for labor market information projects, and $1 million for related technology improvements. Because the state had originally requested $10.2 million for the combined first and second year grants ($4 million more than received), Minnesota respondents indicated that they have had to scale back or eliminate some of the proposed projects. The largest major cutbacks occurred in the form of reduced technology support to Workforce Centers which was cut from $800,000 during the first year to $180,000 in the second year.

MDES does not mandate formal cost-sharing agreements across programs at the local level, but all 17 Workforce Service Areas are required to negotiate non-financial agreements. Workforce Service Areas finalized their local planning processes and completed plans for local service integration in July 1995. As of June, 1996, all areas had updated local integration plans and had negotiated (or re-negotiated) non-financial agreements among partner agencies.

DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of the State One-Stop Design

The Minnesota state One-Stop initiative is based on the principle that implementation of One-Stop systems must occur at the local level with the state providing clear guidance. The state recognizes that local partners possess unique knowledge about the specific requirements of workforce development in their local areas. Much of the work of the state Workforce Center Systems office can be described as consensus-building among state and local partners.

The state has already come a long way in terms of overcoming barriers to greater coordination among the different agencies responsible for workforce development programs. In December 1993, the state's vision of co-location was first discussed at a state-wide meeting of Job Service managers and JTPA SDA directors. A second meeting, held in early 1994, also included representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation and State Services for the Blind. Respondents indicated that these different groups were initially "very jealous of their turf" and "had negative feelings about each other."

As a result of these meetings, however, participants began to agree that greater integration of services would be an essential feature of system improvements designed to enhance customer satisfaction. Focus groups held at this time with employers and individual customers revealed that both groups were highly critical of the public workforce development system. Employers criticized the existing system, with its multiplicity of job listing services as "wasteful of time and resources." Most employers indicated that it was difficult to get reliable labor market information and that Job Service failed to provide high quality service. Job-seeker respondents indicated that it was necessary to "learn the system" to receive adequate services. Persons with disabilities criticized the system as inconvenient. Because of the clear need to improve customer services and because co-location and consolidation of services were viewed as a necessary response to reduced funding levels, MDES leadership continued with the initiative to promote service co-location and consolidation, despite the fears of program staff and administrators.

In order to address these issues, a number of reforms associated with One-Stop implementation have begun. The state uses a certification process to guide local One-Stop system development efforts. A detailed checklist of "benchmarks" developed as part of the certification process describes the requirements for local areas in the dimensions of local partnerships, governance, and service designs. MDES's benchmarks include measures of (1) integrated staffing; (2) co-location; (3) customer satisfaction; (4) inclusiveness and efficacy of governance structures; (4) comprehensiveness of services; (5) access; and (6) performance outcomes. These are briefly described below:

- *Integration of staffing* is measured by indicators such as the frequency of joint staff meetings and staff cross-training and the number of staff whose positions are funded from multiple program sources;
- *Co-location* is measured by the diversity of workforce services and related activities at Centers, and the amount of shared common use of resources including equipment and areas of the building, such as reception areas;
- To be certified as One-Stop centers, local sites must measure *customer satisfaction;* the results of any customer satisfaction surveys are reviewed as part of the certification process;
- The appropriateness of *governance structures* are assessed through measures such as the percentage of Center activities which were planned and reviewed by local Councils, and the degree to which the Center and governing bodies involve representatives from a broad spectrum of government entities;
- *Comprehensiveness* is measured by the scope of activities and services; services targeted to special populations must be available either on-site or through contractual agreements and/or non-financial agreements.
- *Access* measures include the percentage of activities or services that can be obtained through a single application or intake document, the percentage of off-site activities and services that are covered by a preliminary eligibility assessment, whether access is provided through toll-free telephone numbers, whether the Center offers extended hours and/or days of service, and whether there are any extension activities offered through arrangements such as mobile units or "out-staffing" at other locations.

In addition to the benchmarks listed above, a variety of core or universal services are mandated in the state's template for local implementation plans. Services offered at sites must be categorized as either "universal" services available to the general population (of either job seekers or employers) or "eligibility-based" services, reserved for individuals that meet the requirements established by categorical programs. In addition to the typology of universal versus eligibility-based services, the state specifies three types of service standards: 1) "state-standardized" services must meet uniform standards established at the state level; 2) "locally customized" services must be present, but may be customized to meet local needs; and 3) "locally flexible" services may be initiated at local discretion to meet local needs.

Universal Services for Job Seekers. Universal services which are to be made available to all job seekers at Workforce Centers regardless of their eligibility for specific programs include the following:

- *Service Consultation and Eligibility Determination.* Workforce Centers are required to have a staff person who has an understanding of the broad menu of services available. This individual is often responsible for initial screening and referral to appropriate service providers.
- *Resource Center.* Resource Centers must contain information about career areas, the future outlook for employment opportunities in a variety of career categories, and state and national businesses (also see "employer profiles" below). Information is to be provided in a variety of media, including hard copy documents, periodicals, and videos. Resource Centers will also contain most, if not all, of the services described below.
- Minnesota Career Information System (CIS). This is a computer based encyclopedia on education and training programs available throughout the nation. It includes information on campus size, admission requirements, financial aid, and demographics. It also contains an interactive "Quest" preference testing module that helps job seekers determine their best occupational path.
- *Labor Market Information.* All Centers are to provide basic data on types of employment by region, as well as wage and labor market trends.
- *Information on Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Jobs,* based on information provided by employers and on generally accepted skill standards.
- *Information on Education and Training Programs.* Centers are to provide job seekers with information on long- and short-term education and training options, including the locations, methods, schedules, and application procedures and requirements. There should also be information on the quality of education and training providers as measured by completion rates and the wages of graduates.
- *Job Development and Job Listings.* Through outreach and marketing to employers, Centers are expected to encourage the listing of jobs. Job

listings include information on current vacancies, required skills and knowledge, hours, and benefits.

- *Hiring Requirements.* Centers are to provide information on how to gain access to jobs through unions or internal systems listings, such as civil service examinations.
- *Employer Profiles.* Centers are expected to maintain annual reports, reference books, and employer documents and videos to help job seekers determine appropriate employers and prepare for interviews.
- *Job Matching.* This service includes screening and referrals to jobs, and may involve scheduling appointments.
- *Referral Network.* This will involve electronically linked data banks on all services and organizations providing a variety of support services.

Universal Services for Employers. Responding to the demands of employers for access to a larger job applicant pool and to useful and accurate labor market information, MDES requires that One-Stops take steps to establish a set of universal services to be made available to businesses. These include the following:

- *Employer Library and Seminars.* Employer libraries, which are to be maintained by Job Service, are expected to contain information for employers on opportunities and requirements for starting and operating businesses. Seminar topics can include information on ADA, Workers' Compensation, Reemployment Insurance Tax, and other topics of interest to business.
- *Skill-based Job-Seeker Pool.* Job Service and Veterans' Employment Service representatives are expected to maintain easily accessible lists of individuals catalogued by skills. The list can also be used to provide aggregate data for labor market planning on the number of individuals possessing certain skills.
- *ADA Compliance Information.* Various agencies, such as Job Service, Vocational Rehabilitation, State Services for the Blind, and Veterans' Employment Service, are expected to maintain information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) so that employers can make provisions for compliance. Training for individuals and groups should also be provided.
- *Labor Market Information.* LMI for business planning, including wage and trend details, should be available through MDES regional analysts. Customized LMI analysis should also be available on a fee-for-service basis.
- *Economic Linkages.* Depending on local capabilities, referral to existing resources is to be made available through all core Center

partners. Referrals are to assist employers in continuing or expanding existing businesses or creating new business.

- *Employer Tax and Registration Services.* After the implementation of the planned "Uniform Business Identifier," new businesses will be able to register at One-Stops using a single code recognized by 10 different state agencies.
- *Information and Referral for Customized Training and Employer Subsidies.* Although the services will be based on eligibility, all employers should have access to information on CJT and a review of available programs and service providers.
- *Other Core services* include job development, access to the state-wide job bank, Internet-accessible job listings, resume-matching through Minnesota SkillsNet, Employee profiling and assessment, and hiring advice and information on ADA, EEO, workers compensation, and UI.

Eligibility-Based Services for Job Seekers. Special services must also be available for persons eligible for categorical programs including Rehabilitation Services, State Services for the Blind, JTPA programs, and Older Worker Programs. These "eligibility-based" services for individuals include in-depth testing and assessment, personal profiling for labor marketing "viability," income support (including UI, extended benefits, TAA), training in career decision-making skills, career counseling, case management, training assistance, classroom training, supportive services, training in job search skills, providing monthly payments on earned income credit, and follow-up services.

Eligibility- or Fee-Based Services for Employers. Special services to employers include an account representative service, which assigns an individual representative to a company to provide ongoing services and fulfill unique employer preferences; employer-requested testing to identify preferred job candidates; the provision of business planning data and customized LMI analysis; rapid response for planned large-scale layoffs; customized job training; current workforce skills assessment; and employer subsidies for hiring and/or training of employees.

The state does not mandate detailed criteria for One-Stop physical facilities. However, certification requires that all service providers be co-located and ideally occupy contiguous spaces. The floor plan should be functionally designed to encourage opportunities for team-building and partnering. Local partners are responsible for determining the suitability of One-Stop center facilities; but if needed, the state will assist them in this process. Local partners are expected first to examine the potential of existing facilities and to make a determination if all of the partners specified in local plans can be accommodated. If this is the case, partners are asked to design a floor plan that includes common reception areas suitable for the operation of an integrated Workforce Center. When existing space does not allow for co-location of programs, local areas have the option to seek new sites in the community that will accommodate space and layout needs. State respondents are comfortable with the fact that the actual configuration of Centers will vary from place to place, and that much will depend on the past collaboration among partners.

State respondents realize that time is needed in the transition process. They allow Centers to start advertising themselves as "Workforce Centers" if, in the words of a major player in the state's One-Stop initiative, they are "seeing the light at the end of the tunnel" in regards to meeting One-Stop criteria. At the same time, the state is cautious in this respect—a Center that is not well developed and uses the name "Workforce Center" could damage the image of the new system. According to one Workforce Center staff, "Workforce Centers are something new. . .When our customers enter a Workforce Center, they should find something different and better, not just the same old stuff with a new coat of paint."

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals

The goal of the Minnesota One-Stop initiative is to transform a workforce services system characterized by fragmentation and duplication to one which offers comprehensive, integrated, and individualized services. All customers will be able to choose from a menu of high quality information sources and services. Ideally, these changes will enable the public workforce development system to become the "service provider of choice" for all Minnesotans. Customers are expected to experience the same comfortable and friendly environment that they would find in a library.

Universal Access

The state of Minnesota has made a commitment to provide all populations with an "array of job seeking and employment development assistance." To this end, an "elements matrix" has been designed that details the universal services that must be provided at local Workforce Centers. The state also strongly advocates that local partners extend Center access, when appropriate, through (1) mobile outreach to rural communities and (2) extended evening and weekend hours of operation to accommodate employed individuals who may wish to explore further career options.

Universal services for job seekers are designed to fulfill many of the potential needs of these customers. Customers are to be offered information on national, state, and regional labor markets and employment trends; employers; job listings; the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for specific jobs and careers; and the availability and quality of local education and training programs. This information is to be made available in a variety of media, including printed materials, videos, and computer databases and software. The state also has a strong commitment to enabling persons with disabilities to access all center services, and compliance with all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act is another state priority. To further this commitment, the state intends to make services and information available in a variety of formats, so that non-English speakers as well as those with visual or hearing impairments can also benefit.

Another system goal related to customer choice is that all residents should have access to the services of a Workforce Center regardless of where they live. In metropolitan areas, in which a number of centers are established, customers are encouraged to use whatever facility they feel is best suited to their individual needs. As communications among Centers becomes more developed, customers will be able to initiate services at one site and receive ongoing services at another. The state also emphasizes mobile outreach for residents of rural communities that lack easy access to a Workforce Center. The Workforce Center system in Minnesota also allows all residents to access automated One-Stop information services through bulletin board and Internet systems from their homes as well as from public institutions such as libraries.

There is also a commitment to providing universal access to employers. In addition to universal services open to all job seekers, the state requires local centers to offer all employers a menu of core services. These include access to materials on starting and operating businesses; information and seminars on dealing with government regulations; labor market information for business planning purposes; and access information on customized job training; access to lists of job seekers by skills categories, the state-wide job bank, Internet job listings, and electronic resume matching.

Customer Choice

Minnesota furthers the goal of customer choice by providing job seekers and employers with accurate and detailed information on the array of service options available to them. By doing so, it is expected that customers will be able to make informed choices on the agencies or training institutions that will best serve their needs. If customers are not satisfied with their original choice of training provider, they should be able to change programs or service providers. By moving toward a system of local governance that separates the provision of services from oversight and administration, the ability of local Workforce Councils to act as "honest brokers" of information promoting customer choice among providers is expected to be enhanced.

Integrated Services

Minnesota's vision of workforce development involves co-locating and integrating all of the six required DOL One-Stop programs and providing access to as wide a range of other workforce and support services as possible at its Workforce Centers. Additional programs that must be accessible through the Minnesota Workforce Centers include JOBS, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Vocational Rehabilitation, the state's Work Readiness program targeted to general assistance recipients, and State Services for the Blind. In addition to mandating these programs, the state encourages local centers through its One-Stop benchmarking and certification procedure, to develop broad partnerships with other employment-, education-, and economic development-related agencies and programs.

Through integration, is expected that (1) wasteful duplication will be eliminated; (2) partners within the system will be able to concentrate on those aspects of workforce development they do best; and (3) continuing gaps in employment and training services will be identified. To ensure the highest degree of coordination and integration of service delivery, the state has mandated that each Center have in place a process to promote integration of the following activities across partner programs and agencies: common intake, eligibility determination, UI profiling and reemployment services, assessment, case management, and job development and placement.

As mentioned earlier, MDES is now undergoing an aggressive campaign to co-locate all of the services over which it has fiscal and administrative control. As of March, 1996, MDES held leases at 117 separate locations, and although a high percentage of Job Service offices are already co-located, there still remain a number of single service "stand-alone" offices. The state has announced that it will no longer pay the leases of these offices when their current leases expire. In addition to providing better service to customers, Minnesota's approach is expected to lead to savings in both facility costs and center management costs.

Performance-Driven/Outcome Based

The state has identified seven core areas in which One-Stop outcomes are to be measured: customer satisfaction, services to employers and job seekers, universality, choice, labor market services, integration, and financial accountability. Customer satisfaction surveys are expected to be conducted at all Centers during their first-year of operation to establish baseline data by which improvement in this area can be measured. Centers must show continuous progress in offering access to electronic services and must document their ability to offer customers the widest possible range of choice of services and service providers.

State respondents identified the weakest link in performance assessment as the limited ability of the state and local areas to collect and analyze performance data. To address this issue, a Data Unification Management Program was proposed in April, 1996. The purpose of this program is to determine what data are mandated for collection across all of the federal- and state-funded programs. In addition, the program would identify what data are "unnecessary" from the perspective of assessing One-Stop performance and request waivers to eliminate the unnecessary data to reduce the overall data collection burden. It was still unclear at the time of the evaluation visit, however, whether funding would be available for this project.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

In its efforts to transform itself into a "total quality" organization, MDES has placed an emphasis on staff development. While not specific to One-Stop implementation at the outset, these capacity building efforts have been focused on supporting organizational change designed to improve the quality of customer services. Over time, the One-Stop vision has become the embodiment of the systems change that the state is trying to support through capacity-building efforts at the state and local levels.

In January 1993, a survey of JS/UI staff was undertaken in an effort to determine the training and staff development needs of personnel at the state and local levels. All managers, supervisors, and "lead workers," and 25% of all other staff in the division were included in this survey. Staff indicated in this survey that there was a need for more program-based training and that training should be regular and on-going and should consider the long-term needs of employees for developing and diversifying their work. In response to a related concern for promoting positive organizational change through training, a labor-management team was established in October 1993 to assist the department in establishing an effective training model.

As a result of these activities, the director of Training and Learning Resources at MDES began an "integrated needs assessment" of all partners in the One-Stop initiative. Training and technical assistance for JTPA SDA staff, which had begun in the Fall of 1994, was expanded to include staff from Job Service and other partner staff such as State Services for the Blind and the Division of Rehabilitation Service. Two "tracks" for on-going training were designed, one for line employees and another for supervisors and directors.

Current ongoing staff training efforts administered by MDES focus on *technology* and *integrated service delivery*. Specific areas of training include (1) training in the new desktop computer technologies which are becoming available at all Centers; and (2) training on the key functions and responsibilities of "service consultants," who serve as the first point of contact at Workforce Centers. MDES, through its St. Paul Training Center, also offers a regular schedule of classes for front-line staff including

- *computer classes* on topics such as basic PC and Windows functions, word processing, and intranet and Internet technology;
- *employee development classes* on such topics as employee career development, working with the media, "dealing with difficult people," communications, sexual harassment, new employee orientations, customer service, making effective presentations, customer office ergonomics, and an overview of ADA regulations which focuses on awareness of disabilities.

Specialized training programs and courses for targeted groups and specialized programs are also offered.

In 1995, MDES (through its Office of Quality Resources) also joined forces with the state JTPA Association[7] to launch a "Workforce Excellence Initiative" funded in large part by a grant from the McKnight foundation. The objectives of this initiative include (1) *combining resources* in Workforce Centers and creating a "model partnership" among federal, state, local, and private organizations; (2) p*romoting customer satisfaction and continuous improvement* based on TQM criteria; (3)

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[7] The JTPA association was formed for two primary reasons: (1) to provide capacity building and technical assistance and (2) to organize JTPA directors into a more cohesive group.

providing training and technical assistance to all partners involved in Workforce centers; and (4) *introducing "best practices"* through replication of products and resources developed throughout the country. Some of the products under development include an automated self-assessment instrument, a "Workforce Excellence Guide," and Workforce Excellence training. Workforce Excellence training will be offered to groups of approximately 100 people at a time in a "train the champion" model. It is expected that about 80% of the individuals participating in training will be from Workforce Centers and 20% from MDES headquarters offices. After a pilot product has been field tested, training will be available throughout the state from March to September, 1997.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

Four LMI priority areas have been identified: (1) regional labor market analysis; (2) electronic data provision; (3) the development of new information including consumer reports; and (4) improved local content and delivery of existing LMI.

To improve regional LMI services, MDES created six new regional LMI analyst positions. Regional analysts are teamed in pairs to serve Workforce Centers in the North, South, and the Twin Cities metropolitan region. Regional labor market specialists have four major responsibilities:

- determining local information needs which will allow Centers to better serve job seekers and employers. This includes working with Centers to gauge local information needs and working with local staff to ensure that Resource Rooms are well stocked with materials;
- organizing and developing new labor market data;
- interpreting trends in the job market and providing this information through both regular and special reports;
- speaking to Workforce Center staff and business, education, and community groups about the state's LMI system and providing them with up-to-date assessments of labor market conditions.

Regional LMI analysts are playing important capacity-building and information-dissemination roles. They have developed a standardized collection of 100 LMI publications and have helped to inventory and stock resource rooms in centers that have already achieved One-Stop certification as well as those that are working toward certification. Regional analysts have also provided training in the use of career and occupational information software that has been installed on Resource Room computers. In addition, analysts have conducted a number of LMI training sessions and helped host a "LMI User's Conference" intended to acquaint One-Stop staff with available LMI. This conference was well-received by local staff.

When the state received fewer One-Stop funds than expected, a number of the planned LMI projects were cut back or postponed until other funding sources could be identified. Lack of available funds resulted in the discontinuation of several planned LMI projects, such as an analysis of current jobs in demand and the development of local skills inventories for use by employers. Several other projects, including OLMID database expansion and the development of consumer reports, were scaled back.

Despite concerns about funding for LMI, the following projects were completed with a combination of One-Stop and other funding streams:

- The first "Higher Education Consumer Report" has been published and distributed.
- The OLMID database now supports an Occupational Information System which is available at One-Stop Centers. Regional analysts are available to train local staff in its use.
- An improved "Minnesota Salary Survey" has been released and a benefits survey is in progress.
- Employment projections were released on a schedule synchronized with national projections. In previous years, there had been lags of one year or more. Employment projections data are currently published and are available through several electronic occupational information systems.
- An Internet web site is currently operational for support of One-Stop Centers and is heavily used. A regional "LMI homepage" has also been developed and will be available in the near future.
- New publications are available including state and regional employment projections, an LMI products and services catalogue, and regional newsletters.
- A "Human Resources Information System," modeled after the North Carolina systems, is currently under development and is expected to be operational in all One-Stop Centers by early 1977.
- LMI for business planning is also available through the new MDES regional analysts. The information available includes wage, employment trends, available job applicant characteristics, and local demographics. Customized LMI analysis is also available on a fee-for-service basis.

- Monthly and quarterly LMI publications were expanded to include more regional analysis. These have begun to be published "on-line."

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Minnesota is part of GEORGE, a multi-state consortium working to develop software to support integrated intake and the delivery of post-intake services in a One-Stop environment. This integrated information system would allow One-Stop "case managers" to schedule client services, take case notes, develop customer work plans, and plan transition services. This project was undertaken to unify the multiplicity of data collection, reporting, and administrative tracking activities currently required to meet federal and state reporting requirements for multiple categorical funding streams, and to prepare for a more simplified set of program requirements at some point in the future. An integrated management information system is expected to allow a number of agency users in a center to function as a team. The system would allow centers to track outcomes for individuals receiving services from multiple agencies. It would also permit case managers to schedule customers for services provided by a variety of service providers and share relevant case notes with case managers in other systems.

State respondents described the current information requirements placed on One-Stop systems as unrelated to the ultimate program goals. As expressed by one state respondent, "the current systems. . . are directed toward program administration purposes, they're not designed for workforce development." State respondents also expressed the opinion that the current lack of consensus about measuring the outcomes for One-Stops makes it difficult for states to design their information systems, since they are struggling to "anticipate what [federal] outcome standards might be."

State MIS staff are also critical of the slow national pace in moving away from the present fragmented information and reporting systems for workforce development services. State respondents stated that some of the difficulties in designing and implementing more unified information systems have their roots in the history of "fractured" administration at the state and national levels. Some respondents believed that a stronger direct federal role in the development of integrated client-level information and case management systems might be preferable to the current consortium approach that encourages groups of states to work together on these issues.

Although the idea of developing a standardized uniform reporting format has some appeal, MDES respondents indicated that they have already made a large investment in their current data processing systems and hope to build on existing information systems by "tying them together, and putting a unified face on them." They are somewhat optimistic about being able to link the various MDES-related information systems but view the development of common intake with other agencies, such as MDHS, as a greater challenge. The amount of data required for JTPA program administration, although fairly substantial, is much less than that required for MDHS income maintenance programs, which currently require completion of a 30-page application.

Marketing

State staff distinguish between "internal" and "external" marketing. Internal marketing is seen as closely linked to the issues described above under communication and coordination. One of the major goals of internal marketing is convincing local partners that One-Stop centers can benefit both customers and individual partner programs. In marketing One-Stops to internal customers, the state describes the cost savings that can achieved by sharing the costs of shared facilities and equipment. They also indicate that the money saved as a result of reducing duplication of services and equipment can be used to save jobs and ultimately provide more services to customers.

External marketing is seen as the responsibility of all One-Stop partners. It is expected that all employees be prepared to talk about the benefits of the new system to both employers and job seekers. However, state and local staff realize that the general public is only gradually becoming aware of the improvements brought about by One-Stop and related systemic reforms. In order to make the One-Stop system changes more visible, MDES created a marketing staff position for the Workforce Center System in mid-1996. In addition, thirty-three staff in local offices have been assigned to marketing activities, with a minimum of one "marketer' per Workforce Service Area.

At both state and local levels, marketers have targeted employers as the primary One-Stop customers to whom outreach needs to be conducted. A variety of business forums, such as chambers of commerce, will be used to promote the new One-Stop services available to businesses. One of the major selling points to employers is that the new workforce system will save employers' time in recruiting, because *all* of the job-seeker populations will be available in one pool, in contrast to the previous system, in which various programs tried to place their "own" participants.

Two other activities have also resulted in increasing public awareness of the state's One-Stop initiative. In February 1996, MDES, in collaboration with a Twin Cities public television station, sponsored a two-hour prime-time "on-the-air job fair," hosted by two popular metropolitan area news reporters. The job fair elicited more than 280 new job postings from businesses and resulted in the referral of 516 job seekers. As a result of favorable responses by employers, job seekers, and the media, ongoing "On-Air Job Fairs" have been scheduled on a commercial television station. Another commercial television station in the metropolitan area has also begun to regularly air "video résumés," in which job seekers briefly describe their skills and experiences.

Other marketing efforts include the preparation of guidelines for the use of the Minnesota Workforce Center System logo by local Centers certified as One-Stops, the establishment of a monthly MDES publication called "Connecting," and the development of a template for an eight page newsletter, "Connection," which can be used by Workforce Service Areas to provide information about Workforce Centers to the general public. The state plans to continue to assist local marketing efforts by providing local marketing staff with desktop publishing software for use in generating newsletters. In addition, a series of "employer conferences" which would introduce the Workforce Center System to employers is also under discussion.

The following report excerpted from a St. Paul newspaper illustrates the generally positive reception given to Workforce Centers by the news media:

> Minnesota Workforce centers are state-operated offices that serve job-seekers and employers. There is never a fee, and anyone—unemployed or working, teen-ager or retiree—can make use of the services offered. There is one price to pay, however. You'll have to check your previous experiences with government agencies at the door. The new Workforce Centers are really the old unemployment offices. Same staffs, and, in many cases, same locations. But a whole new outlook. . . I have spent my share of time in government-operated jobs offices . . . and this is one of the friendliest places I have ever experienced.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Minnesota's initial plan was to create a series of customer-friendly offices through co-location of agencies under MDES. According to Workforce Center System respondents, during the process of applying for a federal One-Stop Implementation Grant, the system's designers realized that in addition to co-location, there were more far-reaching opportunities for improving service to customers. As a result, designers of the system have shifted the focus of the Minnesota One-Stop initiative from not only improving the efficiency of the system to finding what they describe as "new ways of doing business."

The state's One-Stop system is currently based on a set of 17 local plans designed to implement the vision contained in the state's One-Stop proposal. Although it was originally envisioned that One-Stops would be implemented throughout the state over a three-year period, the plan has since been revised so that the majority of Workforce Centers will be operational by the end of the second year of implementation. According to the director of the Workforce Center system, "we see no reason to stretch the implementation process out over three years. Our goal is to get it up and operational as fast as possible, to get results, and to ensure continuing funding."

Not all Centers, however, are achieving the goals articulated by the state as quickly as others. Some Centers were described as "ahead of the vision," bringing into the mix a wide range of non-Labor partners and overcoming such challenges as creating "real" roles for Rehabilitation Services and State Services for the Blind. Although many local areas have continued to make progress toward One-Stop goals, others were described as being "trapped in a 'this too will pass' mentality."

MDES will certainly face major challenges in increasing the number of One-Stops from 8 to more than 40 by the end of the second implementation year. Local areas are charged with designing their own implementation plans and time schedules, but according to state respondents, not all have expressed the same level of enthusiasm. Resistance to the "new way of doing business" shows up in a variety of forms. For example, some local staff have demanded that they be able to keep private offices, although MDES's policy is to encourage as much accessibility to individual customers as possible, while ensuring that adequate private space is available to those staff who can demonstrate that a majority of her customers need privacy. Another obstacle to smooth implementation is conflict at local levels about regulations and laws concerning what materials and equipment can or cannot be shared. Workforce Center respondents, however, indicate that many of these obstacles to One-Stop implementation turn out to be minor and can be addressed in a way which is acceptable to One-Stop partners.

INFLUENCES ON STATE DESIGN

The Minnesota Workforce center system was envisioned as a state-local partnership that would focus on customers' needs and ensure a balance of state and local influence in decision-making. It was also considered important for unions to be consulted in this process and for them to continue to represent their constituency staff in Workforce Centers.

Prior to the federal initiative, Minnesota had begun the process of promoting co-location of its Job Service/Reemployment Insurance offices with other providers of federal, state, and local workforce services. The federal-level One-Stop design and vision added impetus to this process, particularly as it emphasized integration and co-location of services. Reform was seen as a positive step toward reducing waste and duplication of services. State respondents were enthusiastic about One-Stop, which they described as a "visionary" federal initiative which complements their own concerns with total quality management. As a result, Minnesota has aggressively promoted One-Stops and has involved top MDES officials in an effort to communicate the federal-state One-Stop vision to local partners throughout the state.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

Minnesota's Workforce Center System has developed a vision of a customer-oriented workforce system, and has established clear and practical guidelines for helping local areas realize the goal of opening as many One-Stops throughout the state as rapidly as possible. The One-Stop initiative has also strengthened local partnership building and supported previously existing state-wide initiatives that promoted co-location of workforce services and the development of MDES as a "total quality" organization. Efforts to publicize the new system, bolstered by the Commissioners' tour of the state and the hiring of "marketers," have met with initial success. Minnesota has also experimented with several innovative ideas including collaboration with broadcast media for promoting concepts such as On-the-Air Job Fairs and video résumés. All of these factors have prompted the state to push its One-Stop implementation time-table forward.

During the evaluation visit, respondents identified several continuing challenges to One-Stop implementation in Minnesota. The most difficult challenge over the next few years will be to increase the involvement of "non-DOL partners" in the workforce system. A second challenge, at both the state and local levels, will be to overcome still existing tendencies to "think programmatically rather than in terms of service delivery." A third obstacle will be to find ways to improve services in the face of decreasing overall funding levels. Perhaps the most important challenge will be to continue the task of consensus building. The process of implementing any large organization change demands an extraordinary commitment of time and effort. "Ideally we would have spent two or three years building consensus, making local partners part of process, getting buy-in before implementing One-Stops throughout the state," said one key Workforce Center System respondent. "We have, however, committed to making this process as fast as possible. This means that we have to review all quarterly updates, keep on top of facilities problems, ADA conformity, problems arising in issues teams meeting, making sure that we're up to speed on everybody's progress. What we want from reluctant participants is at least to have them come to the table."

During the first year of One-Stop implementation, local areas have been allowed a fair amount of latitude in designing their local systems. During this period of early implementation, the Workforce Center team at the state has facilitated broad-based consultation among key state and local staff. As a result of this experience, the state has made a further commitment to One-Stop centers (e.g., by announcing that it will no longer pay for leases of "stand-alone" service provider sites that offer only limited services after the current leases expire) and, furthermore, has identified "best practices" at some local sites. In the process, the state has also developed a clearer idea of what it thinks One-Stop Centers should look like. In part because of the accelerated roll-out of One-Stops, however, some locals are concerned about an "over-specification" or "cookie cutter" approach by the state. State Workforce Center Systems respondents insist, however, that it is not their intention to "micro-manage" the process of building local partnerships nor to dictate how resources should be shared at the local level. They point to the fact that locals have flexibility in determining the extent to which non-mandated partners are included in the One-Stop design, as well as the extent to which "additional" or non-mandated services are made available.

APPENDIX P

MINNESOTA WORKFORCE CENTER - ANOKA COUNTY
BLAINE, MINNESOTA
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During September 1996

MINNESOTA WORKFORCE CENTER - ANOKA COUNTY
BLAINE, MINNESOTA
One-Stop Profile

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MINNESOTA WORKFORCE CENTER - ANOKA COUNTY
BLAINE, MINNESOTA
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Minnesota Workforce Center of Anoka County is located in the city of Blaine, a Twin Cities suburb about 25 miles north of downtown Minneapolis. Anoka is Minnesota's fourth largest county, with a population of approximately 275,000. Although the county's residents are predominantly European-American (97%), non-European immigrant populations are increasing partly due to the existence of a refugee resettlement program in the county. The county has a relatively low rate of poverty. In 1990, an estimated 4% of all Anoka County families lived below the poverty level, but nearly one-quarter (23%) of female-headed households lived below the poverty level. 87% of county residents have a high school diploma or GED, and average annual household income in 1990 was approximately $40,000.

In recent years, new job creation in the county has outpaced population growth. Sectors such as instruments, medical products, and business services accounted for the largest percentage of new jobs created during the first half of the 1990s. Throughout the 1990s, although Anoka County has generally had the highest unemployment rates of the counties within the metropolitan area, rates have been lower than the state average. From 1990 to 1993, unemployment in the county has averaged slightly under 5%; since 1994, the rate has declined. The present level of unemployment is estimated at 3%.

One-Stop implementation in Anoka County has been built on a strong foundation of collaboration among workforce and social service providers at both at the state and local level. As described in the state profile for Minnesota, consolidation of workforce development programs under Minnesota's Department of Economic Security (MDES) began in 1977 with the merging of the Department of Employment Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Governor's Manpower office, and the Economic Opportunity Office. In 1985, State Services for the Blind was combined with existing

MDES programs.[1] Since 1986, one of the state's goals has been to encourage physical co-location of Job Service and Unemployment Insurance[2] services with as many local service providers as possible.

In Anoka County, the first steps toward a consolidated workforce center came in 1988, when the Anoka County Board of Commissioners and the Anoka County Private Industry Council (PIC) integrated welfare employment and training programs with JTPA and other employment and training initiatives within the Anoka County service delivery area (SDA). In 1991, a large group of workforce development and human service agencies relocated to a new shared physical facility—the Anoka County Human Service Center.

In 1995, after four years of co-location and increasingly collaborative planning, the county's JTPA administrative entity called the Anoka County Job Training Center (ACJTC), the Blaine office of MDES's Job Service/Unemployment Insurance (ES/UI), and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) joined together to form the "Minnesota Workforce Center - Anoka County." In June, 1996, the Anoka County Income Maintenance Department and Child Care Assistance became co-located partners within the Workforce Center. State Services for the Blind (SSB) is also considered an official partner although it does not have staff housed at the Center.[3]

As described in more detail later in this profile, the core partners in the Anoka County Workforce Center—the agencies responsible for JTPA, ES/UI, Vocational Rehabilitation, Income Maintenance, and Child Care Assistance—have developed an integrated Center under the One-Stop initiative that takes advantage of the specialized functions of each agency partner. A cross-agency consolidated planning and oversight process is used to shape these differentiated functions into a coordinated workforce development service delivery system. In addition, the core public agency partners in

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[1] Although MDES was renamed the Department of Jobs and Training in 1985, its earlier name, the Minnesota Department of Economic Security, was restored in 1994. The Department of Jobs and Training and the Department of Economic Security are both referred to as "MDES" in this profile.

[2] Unemployment Insurance has been called Reemployment Insurance in Minnesota since 1994. We use the more generic Unemployment Insurance (UI) designation throughout this profile, as well as the generic designation ES (for Employment Service) to refer to the Minnesota Job Service.

[3] State Services for the Blind staff are available on an "on-call" or referral basis to serve Center customers.

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the Anoka County Workforce Center are co-located with twenty other human services and education providers in a clean and modern building known as the Anoka County Human Service Center, construction of which was completed in 1991. One observer has termed this a "Center around the Center,"[4]—a Workforce Center housed within a larger social service complex in which a range of services are available, including educational, counseling, income maintenance, and various support services.

The local vision of One-Stop is to provide employment and training programs within "a seamless system that supports community-based coordination with other service programs." The goals of the system are to

- emphasize quality outcomes and customer satisfaction from job seekers and employers;
- provide the means for customers to make informed career, training, and hiring choices through effective assessment and labor market information;
- support customer service through an information system that promotes sharing of information and maximization of resources;
- replicate and expand on already-existing innovative efforts to provide comprehensive, high quality employment and training services;
- increase the global competitiveness of the workforce.

Several key factors have influenced the context within which the local One-Stop vision has emerged. These include (1) a history of innovative approaches toward inter-agency team-building; (2) local political and financial support for the creation of a coordinated system for workforce development; (3) a high degree of cooperation and coordination among the core partners of the Workforce Center and between these partners and the other agencies co-located at the Human Service Center; (4) a proactive and coordinated public support system in the context of welfare-to-work and school-to-work initiatives; (4) present low unemployment rates and a consequent tight labor market; (5) a decline in overall funding at the Center; and (6) a site that is well equipped for establishing a One-Stop. Each of these factors is briefly described below.

- *Since the mid-1980s, a variety of Anoka County agencies have collaborated in the forming of "fusion teams."* These teams began to form around specific innovative programs such as the Minnesota Parents Fair Share (MNPFS), a program for non-custodial parents of AFDC recipients, which originated in Anoka County. These teams included representatives from such agencies as the Job Training Center, the Minnesota Department of Human Service, and the County Attorney's Office.

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[4] Sheryl L. Head, 1994. "Factors in the Creation of Skills Centers: Five Case Studies," Training and Employment Program, Center for Policy Research, National Governors Association.

- *There is strong local political and institutional support for the creation of a coordinated system for workforce development.* The Anoka Center is a product of ongoing cooperation among city and county governments and departments, non-profit agencies, and private foundations that has led to securing a One-Stop site and achieving continued funding for innovative programs.
- *There is a history of inter-agency cooperation both among Workforce Center "core" partners and with the other agencies that are co-located at the Human Service Center.* Workforce Center partners have had some degree of coordination of services since their co-location in the Human Service Center, and a close collaboration had been formed with the County's Income Maintenance and Child Care Assistance staff prior to their co-location at the Workforce Center in 1996. Well-developed communication mechanisms are also in place to enable workforce efforts to be coordinated with a wide range of agencies and organizations, many of which are also co-located within the larger context of the Human Service Center.
- *The Center is proactively involved in welfare-to-work and school-to-work efforts.* With the recent addition of the County's Income Maintenance and Child Care Assistance staff as core partners of the Workforce Center, and the receipt of a school-to-work implementation grant in partnership with educational institutions, the Center is laying the foundation for increased activity in areas related to transitions to employment.
- *At present, the rate of unemployment in the county is low.* The unemployment rate in the county is currently at about 3%. Although this has made it easier for job seekers to find work, employers are having difficulty finding well-trained personnel. To assist employers, a system of employer "account representatives" has been established at the Center.
- *The Center is faced with the challenge of serving larger numbers of customers with a decreasing budget.* Overall funding levels for all Center programs decreased by 6% in 1996. At the same time the Center is maintaining its commitment to serving a "universal population," including customers from outside the county. This

situation has placed stress on staff and management to "do more with less."

- *The building that houses the Center is generally well suited for a One-Stop.* The Human Service Center is a well-maintained building located in a park-like setting on ten acres, and rental costs for social service agencies and programs are below commercial rates in the area. The Center is easily accessible for most north Twin Cities area residents by car and has a large parking area. Public transportation is also available to the Center.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Policy Oversight. Anoka County is a single-county service delivery area (SDA) under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). As is the case for all of Minnesota's 17 existing SDAs, it has been redesignated as a "Workforce Service Area." A seven-member County Board of Commissioners acts as the grant recipient for all Title II and Title III JTPA funds. In 1995, the existing Private Industry Council's (PIC) membership was expanded to create a local "Workforce Council" that coordinates with the County Board of Commissioners in determining local service delivery decisions. The County's Workforce Council is comprised of a majority of private-sector representatives and is chaired by a private-sector representative. The State's Job Service, the State's Rehabilitation Services, the County's Income Maintenance Department, and local technical and community colleges are also represented on the Workforce Council.

In Minnesota, Workforce Councils have responsibility for (1) selecting local priorities for service and target populations; (2) assuring non-duplication of workforce services; (3) jointly planning for collaboration, on-sight review, and oversight of program performance; and (4) and determining the most effective designation of administrative entities, grant recipients, and program operators for the Workforce Center. Although local Workforce Councils have substantial discretion in selecting local service providers, the state requires that MDES continue to be the grant recipient and administrative entity for Wagner-Peyser, VETS, and UI funds.

Day-to-day governance of the Workforce Center is provided by a Steering Committee that directs, coordinates, and oversees Center operations. The Steering Committee is co-chaired by the directors of four agencies within the Center (JTPA, ES/UI, Rehabilitation Services, and Income Maintenance). Meetings of the Steering Committee, which are held every three weeks, are attended by about twenty supervisory staff and directors from all agency partners at the Center including representatives from Child Care Assistance and the State Services for the Blind. The Steering Committee makes recommendations to the Workforce Council on issues of service improvement, provides input to the preparation of Workforce Center budgets and service coordination plans, oversees customer satisfaction and outcome measurement, and maintains ongoing communication with front-line staff on a variety of policy, funding, and operational issues.

Participating Agencies. As of June 1996, there were six major public agency partners of the Workforce Center, five of which are co-located within the Human Service Center. These are as follows:

- *Anoka County Job Training Center* (ACJTC). The Job Training Center is a county department and is responsible for JTPA and Title V Older Workers Programs. Through cooperative agreements with the Income Maintenance Department, the Job Training Center is also responsible for providing employment and training services to participants in Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET), STRIDE (JOBS) and the Minnesota Family Investment (MFIP) programs. It also receives funds to operate the local Minnesota Parents' Fair Share program, a non-custodial parent support program.
- *Job Service/Unemployment Insurance* provides Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, and Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS).
- *Division of Rehabilitation Services* (DRS). DRS, a division of the Minnesota Department of Economic Security, has also been co-located at the Human Service Center since its opening in 1991. Although it has been part of coordinated Center management since 1991, DRS operated independently of ES/UI and the Job Training Center prior to its inclusion as a formal Workforce Center partner in 1995, largely because of its focus on the disabled, who were perceived as having special needs.
- *Anoka County Income Maintenance.* In 1996, the County's Income Maintenance Department joined the other three core partners, whose directors have co-managed the Workforce Center since the opening of the Human Service Center in 1991. Income Maintenance staff currently co-located at the Center include all intake workers and several financial specialists. Plans are currently underway to co-locate all remaining Income Maintenance staff at the Center as soon as physical renovations are completed.

- *Anoka County's Community Social Services and Mental Health - Child Care Assistance* (CCA). All CCA staff joined the other core partners at the same time as the Income Maintenance staff. CCA offers financial assistance in paying child-care costs for families receiving public assistance and other low-income families.
- *State Services for the Blind* (SSB). SSB is a mandated One-Stop partner under the Minnesota Workforce System One-Stop certification process. Although not a co-located partner because most of the services for the blind are concentrated in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, SSB staff are available to meet with Workforce Center customers on an "on-call" or referral basis.

In addition to the Workforce Center partners listed above, several other agencies that offer workforce-related services are co-located at the Human Service Center. These include the following:

- *Achieve*, which operates under the County Human Service Division, offers a "sheltered work" environment for persons with developmental disabilities;
- *Metro North Learning Lab*, a joint project of six independent school districts, provides adult basic education (ABE), General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation, and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction.
- *Educational Opportunity Center* (EOC) provides counselors who staff the Career Resource library in the Workforce Center on a part-time basis. The goal of the EOC is to assist adults from diverse backgrounds in entering or returning to schools and colleges. Using a variety of assessment, career exploration, and career workshops, EOC staff provide guidance, personal assistance, and referrals on a variety of academic, financial aid, and career development concerns.

Non co-located organizations that have workforce development as an important part of their mission, and with whom the Workforce Center partners maintain close links include the following:

- *Rise, Inc.* provides training and placement services in private industry for people with disabilities.
- Educational and training providers such as *Anoka-Ramsey Community College* and *Anoka-Hennepin Technical College* offer services to Center customers enrolled in funded education/training programs.

A number of additional agencies and organizations located at the Human Service Center offer a wide variety of advocacy, counseling, and referral, services targeted to disadvantaged and disabled populations. These include the following:

- *Anoka County Community Action Program* is a private non-profit social service agency serving disadvantaged and low-income populations through a variety of programs including Head Start, Weatherization, Housing Rehabilitation, and Energy Assistance.
- *Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services* provides medical and nutritional services for families and children through on-site immunization programs, a Well Child Clinic, and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.
- *Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) of Anoka County* provides advocacy and support services to people with developmental disabilities.
- *Catholic Charities* provides a wide range of charitable services to children, families, the elderly, homeless, and refugees.
- *Child Care Resource and Referral* offers information and referrals to child care providers.
- *Community Emergency Assistance Program* offers emergency assistance including an on-site "food shelf" and provides services to help families become self-sufficient.
- *Consumer Advocates for the Handicapped* provides advocacy for persons with disabilities.
- *Family Resource Center* operates through a consortium of eight school districts and offers family education services for children and adults as well as on-site day care for infants and children receiving services at the Human Service Center. For program participants, day care is paid for through specific Human Service Center agencies and is available to others on a sliding scale basis.
- *Judicare* offers free legal advice and representation in civil cases for low-income County residents.
- *Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota* provides counseling services and assistance in finding affordable housing.
- *United Way's First Call for Help* offers 24 hour information and referral services.
- *Wilder Child Guidance Center and Domestic Abuse Program* offers counseling services for children and families and group therapy for domestic abuse.

An important aspect of the Workforce Center is its holistic approach to the integration of welfare-to-work and school-to-work initiatives into the design of service delivery. Two events have promoted these efforts: the move to incorporate the County's Income Maintenance Staff into the Workforce Center and the receipt of a school-to-work implementation grant by the Workforce Center and several education partners.

Linkages with welfare-to-work programs. The Anoka Workforce Center is currently beginning what one respondent described as "the next level of integration" of the welfare system with the workforce development system. In June 1996, 26 Income Maintenance Department intake staff and 9 Child Care Assistance staff joined as partners of the Workforce Center. As soon as a new fourth floor of the Human Service Center is completed in 1997, the remainder of the approximately 100 Income Maintenance staff—those working with ongoing cases—will also be housed within the Workforce Center.

The timing of the integration of Income Maintenance and Child Care Assistance staff into the Workforce Center is viewed as particularly appropriate, because new state welfare reform measures stipulate that as of July 1997, all AFDC recipients with children aged 3 or over will be required to begin looking for work within ten days after finishing a 30-day group orientation. Income Maintenance and Child Care Assistance staff view their adjustment to the Workforce Center as a "major culture shift," but were nearly all positive about the expected benefits to customers. Because the new emphasis will be on helping customers find work rather than administering benefits payments, staff felt that by joining as full partners of the Workforce Center, they were strategically placing themselves to prepare for major changes in the content and focus of their work.

Income maintenance staff have had brief orientations to the programs available through Workforce Center partners, and are optimistic that further integration of staff functions will occur over time. They also see obvious benefits to their customers with the co-location and coordination of services with their workforce development partners. One example of these benefits is that customers making the transition from welfare to work will spend less time in scheduling appointments at different sites. Also, because of the orientation of the Center to preparing customers for work, as well as the availability of affordable and convenient child care through the Family Resource Center, income maintenance staff believe their customers will be better able to concentrate on the job search. According to an Income Maintenance staff person, "We wouldn't have been able to do what we are doing if the Workforce Center concept was not in place. You need this kind of stable structure to implement welfare-to-work." "The message is very different now," said one key Job Training Center staff person. "It's about *work first* from the first day of screening and all throughout orientations, workshop and job search process."

School-to-Work. Workforce Center staff collaborated on the writing of a school-to-work grant with five local independent school districts, business leaders, and the local community college and technical college. They received a $650,000, five-year school-to-work implementation grant and, at the time of the evaluation visit, were in the process of interviewing for a full-time coordinator of school-to-work efforts.

The Workforce Center is to act as the "hub" for Anoka County's school-to-work implementation, serving to bring parties involved in school-to-work together. The Center will also coordinate collection and dissemination of labor market information, which seen as very much lacking in the schools, and has plans to link schools electronically to MDES and other computer databases and programs. Much of the effort will involve educating the community about the purposes of school-to-work. In the words of one key respondent:

> One-Stops have given school districts and community agencies one place to turn for employment services. A lot of teams of from the high schools have come out to see who we are, but some people still don't realize what we can do, working together as completely as we do. We see school-to-work as a crucial part of our service to the community. Our part is in the coordination of services to youth—not just those going on to college. There is a need to educate people that school-to-work is not narrowly vocational, but is concerned with a broad approach to the workplace. It's also not an apprenticeship in which people will be channeled into one area. It's career education, discovery, looking for the *right* career interest.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Because the Anoka model of integrated service delivery stresses not only co-location but coordination of service delivery among a wide range of partners, providing formal mechanisms for communication among partners is seen as crucial. In addition to the Workforce Center "Steering Committee", whose role has been discussed above, there are several forums for communication at the Anoka Center. These include a Workforce Center "Coordination and Planning Group," which meets to discuss issues of Center policy and coordination; "Operations Committees" that address specific aspects of Center operation and provide feedback to the Steering Committee, and a broader "Human Service Advisory Group," which includes representatives from many of the agencies co-located in the Human Service Center complex.

The *Workforce Center Coordination and Planning Group* meets on a quarterly basis. The group, which is co-chaired by the directors of Job Training Center, Job Service, the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and Income Maintenance Services, provides a forum for planning, implementing, and managing a coordinated system of employment and training. The Coordination and Planning Group meetings are described as relatively informal, and they provide an opportunity for partners to discuss a range of policy matters. In addition to the five core Workforce Center partners (Job Training Center, Job Service, and Division of Rehabilitation Services, Anoka County Income Maintenance, and State Services for the Blind), other partners in the Coordination and Planning Group include Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Anoka-Hennepin Technical College, Rise Incorporated, Metro North Learning Lab, the Family Resource Center, and the Anoka County Community Action Program. This shared leadership structure of the Workforce Center has increased the ability of local service providers to combine program strategies and offer innovative service programs.

Cross-agency "operations committees," comprised of front-line and supervisorial staff from the participating Center partners, provide the opportunity for agency staff to discuss and provide input and feedback to the Steering Committee on common service functions (intake, assessment and career planning, job search, training, case management, and employer services, services for the general public) as well as Center-wide operations and management issues (staff training, budgeting and accounting). Another committee, the "customer advisory group," solicits input from focus groups of staff and customers and makes reports on customer feedback to the Steering Committee.

The *Human Service Advisory Group*, composed of all Workforce Center partners and other agencies that are co-located at the Human Service Center, has held regular monthly meetings since the Center began operations in 1991. These meetings provide a forum for Workforce Center partners to coordinate workforce development efforts with the range of social and educational service providers represented at the Human Service Center.

Although there are many opportunities for direct service staff at the Center to participate on these various interagency advisory and operations committees, the different agencies that comprise the Workforce Center still have their own data systems and telephone lines. State and County employees, for example, are on different telephone networks. To facilitate day-to-day communication across staff employed by different agencies, the Center partners are exploring the feasibility of a common telephone system for all Workforce Center staff.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The Anoka County Workforce Center has received support from a variety of public and private non-profit sources. The building that houses the Human Service Center is located in a park-like setting on ten acres donated by the city of Blaine. The city acquired the land through a tax sale and issued tax-exempt revenue bonds to finance construction of the facility. After the municipal bonds are retired, the building will be owned by Anoka County. United Way of the Minneapolis area donated $500,000 over five years for program operation, and the McKnight Foundation gave funds that were used to assist agencies relocate to the new Center. Because the building is publicly owned, rental costs are lower than in comparable commercial sites.

Although an integrated Center budget is prepared annually for the purpose of establishing total Center revenues—with the exception of the One-Stop funds which are jointly administered by the Workforce Center partner programs—each agency is responsible for administering its own funds and each has its own rental agreement with the Human Service Center. The Center has been struggling with ways to maintain high levels of service to a universal population. Revenues received by Workforce Center partners have continued to decline in recent years. Center-wide revenues for 1996 were 6% lower than for 1995, declining from approximately $4.5 million to $4.2 million. Major cuts were experienced in JTPA funding. From 1995 to 1996, Title II-B Summer Youth Employment Program funding was reduced by 43%, Title IIA by 42%, and Title III by 31%, and federal EDWAA formula funding by 29%. Staffing levels have continued to be reduced over the past two years, at the same time that caseloads have increased.

The Center as a whole received $57,000 in One-Stop Implementation Grant funding from the state for program year 1995 and an additional $51,000 in 1996. These funds were used for remodeling (e.g. taking down the walls that separated Job Service from the Job Training Center), for materials and equipment for the Resource

Center and Computer Rooms, and for funding a variety of staff positions related to providing universal services. The County contributes additional funds that are used to pay for services available to all Center customers. Although there are no formal cost-sharing agreements across programs at the local level, non-financial agreements among partners have been signed. Provisions also exist for Workforce Center partners to contract with each other for the delivery of services.

According to Center managers, declining funding levels have taken a toll in terms of reduced employee morale. Another source of financial stress has to do with the Workforce Center's commitment to offer core services to a universal population, including out-of-county residents. Although at the time of the evaluation visit no statistics were available on the proportion of out-of-county residents accessing universal services, there is evidence that this proportion is relatively high. One indicator of the number of non-county residents served comes from a survey of Unemployment Insurance claims taken at the Anoka Center. During the first months of 1996, only 58% were originated by Anoka County residents, with another 32% from the neighboring urban counties of Hennepin and Ramsey, and another 10% from other counties in the Twin Cities region and elsewhere in the state.

MDES officials have consistently stated that there would be no cutbacks because of One-Stop. However, according to one local respondent, "while you really have to give the state credit for that decision, at the same time, in this atmosphere of continuing funding cutbacks, staff are concerned—it's hard for staff sometimes to see the positive side of things when they are looking at losing jobs."

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

The creation of the Anoka Human Service Center was the result of dynamic leadership and advocacy within a broader political environment that emphasizes consensus decision-making. With the support of city and county political leaders, community organizations, and philanthropic foundations, strong advocates of a comprehensive Human Service Center—including the director of the Anoka County Community Action Program (CAP) and the director of the Anoka County Job Training Center—were able to realize their vision of a conveniently located Center in which a variety of social, educational, and workforce development services could be located. The construction of the building that houses the various Center agencies provided the basis for a broad partnership among various human service, educational, and workforce development agencies.

The most recent catalyst for a new design for integrated service delivery was the preparation for a local One-Stop Implementation Grant application in the December 1994. As part of the planning process, state and local partners began to conduct an analysis of common functions. Although the local agencies responsible for JTPA, ES/UI, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services had been co-located at the Human Service Center since 1991 and had developed a degree of coordination of services since that time, it was not until late 1994 and early 1995 that these partners began to work together intensively. One respondent characterized this developing relationship within the Workforce Center and among the partners at the Human Service Center as follows:

> It's more than a partnership, it is a collaboration. There are many 'cross-wires' of funding, but for me the collaboration is the spirit of oneness that we are all serving the same families. We have gone to partners for letters of support. They all know what we're doing. We have a collaborative in that we care about each other's success.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

The partners at the Anoka Workforce Center have developed a service delivery strategy to reach as wide a population as possible and have achieved a high level of visibility to a broad customer base. As described in a later section under core services, a "Career Resource Room" houses a number of automated services available to all interested customers. Additional self-service resources available to all customers include a phone bank, and self-service copy and fax machines.

Partly because of its location in the Human Service Center, the Workforce Center has become known as *the* place in the county to come to prepare for work. Center services are well publicized, and information on Center workshops, programs, and other core services are explained to customers during an orientation. The Center is easily accessible by automobile from most locations in the Twin Cities area, but although it is served by two bus routes, there are still some problems with mass transportation access. People in many areas of the metropolitan region, including some Anoka County areas must still pass through downtown Minneapolis to come to the Center.

The Center provides extended hours of service in order to reach working and under-employed persons looking for opportunities to upgrade skills or change careers, as well as to increase the accessibility of Human Service Center-based classes in ESL, GED, and adult basic education.

Customer Choice

The Anoka County Center is designed to offer county residents a choice of workforce development services in a non-bureaucratic "customer-friendly" atmosphere. The Anoka Center is committed to providing customers a comprehensive menu of services to facilitate customer choice. The Career Resource Room offers services available to the general public. Using these self-service options, individuals can research on-line job listings, call job-line numbers, and access labor market information. They can also practice interviewing skills using interactive computer software, use typing and other office software tutorials, locate information on other community resources, and obtain information about scholarships and career training.

Orientation and information sessions let customers know what other services are available. All customers may register for job search assistance, obtain information about UI benefits, and attend meetings of the Job Club, a networking and support group. Individuals eligible for Unemployment Insurance, categorical programs such as JTPA, welfare-to-work programs, and other services targeted to youth, veterans, older workers, or other groups are informed about their service options.

Integrated Services

Anoka County has a decade-long history of developing innovative interagency collaborative approaches to community problems. The experience of Anoka County with the Minnesota Parents' Fair Share (MNPFS) in the mid-1980s is one early example of forming "fusion teams"—bringing together diverse county, state, and non-profit agencies to work toward a common goal.[5] These and other collaborative management approaches have provided a model that has guided the development of Anoka's Workforce Center.

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[5] Front-line staff at the Anoka County Job Center saw the limitations of trying to collect child support payments from unemployed non-custodial parents was difficult, and understood that jail sentences for so-called "deadbeat dads" only exacerbated this problem. In 1987, involved staff from several county offices and departments developed a collaborative team to plan the Anoka County Child Support Assistance Program, which provides a range of services to unemployed or underemployed non-custodial parents whose children are receiving public assistance. A more complete discussion of MNPFS, particularly as it relates to the Anoka case, is contained in Sweeney, Kathleen, 1996, "A Shared Leadership Model for Human Service Program Management," International Journal of Public Administration, 19 (7), 1105-20.

In response to the state's vision of developing a seamless system of employment and training, the Anoka Workforce Service Area has developed a local integration plan that promotes coordination among on-site service providers. As part of the integration plan, a coordination agreement is in effect between the Job Training Center (JTPA) and the Blaine Job Service/Unemployment Insurance Office (ES/UI). Contracts for services are used as needed to clarify and define the agreements between these agencies.

The Anoka County approach to consolidation and integration of One-Stop services tends to maintain a clear "division of labor" among programs, so that individual agencies are still responsible for certain functions. Cross-agency planning and oversight committees ensure that the overall service system is coordinated by providing the opportunity for all partners to have substantial input into the design and participate in the oversight of these various functions. For example, although initial intake and customer orientation are performed by ES/UI staff, an "Initial Services Committee," formed in January 1995 with staff from the Job Training Center, Job Service and Unemployment Insurance, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services, identifies the range of customer services and formulates procedures for integration of the intake function across all partner programs. Similarly, a multi-agency "Employer Services Committee" provides on-going suggestions for streamlining services to employers through the system of "employer account representatives," even though the employer services function is staffed by Job Service and coordinated by a "marketer" who is also an MDES employee.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Developing a system for measuring customer satisfaction with Center services, and for assessing Center-wide outcomes in a way that goes beyond current programmatic reporting requirements, has been the subject of on-going discussions of the customer satisfaction and employer services committees. In addition to local efforts to develop performance measures for the Center, a system of One-Stop performance measures is being developed at the state level.

Since 1995, individual customers have been asked to provide opinions of Center operations and services using feedback forms that are available at reception and through participation in regular "customer advisory" focus groups. Although data on customer satisfaction have been collected, respondents believe that there is not yet an effective system to analyze and disseminate the information to front-line staff. To remedy this situation, an Evaluation Committee, charged with formulating an effective system for evaluating Center-wide performance, was being established at the time of the evaluation visit. Some initial suggestions made by the Committee include sending surveys by mail to Center customers and having a "mystery shopper" (someone from outside the Center who would pose as a customer) report on Center services and customer-friendliness.

Physical Facilities

The Human Service Center is located on a ten-acre parcel. There is an attractive lawn and parking area in front of the building, and a large pond in the back. The second floor of the building is shared by Job Service, Rehabilitation Services, the Job Training Center, and Metro North, which provides adult basic education, ESL, and GED courses. A portion of the third floor is occupied by additional Job Training Center staff and the staff from Income Maintenance and Child Care Assistance. There are currently five large rooms used by the general public. All of these rooms are located near the main customer entrance of the Workforce Center. They include a Job Search Area, the Career Resource Library, a Personal Computer Lab, a Job Club Room, and a Phone Room. There are also several conference rooms and classroom areas within the Workforce Center. Because of demand for more space in the complex, construction of a fourth story on top of the existing three-story, 100,000-square-feet building was expected to begin in October, 1996 and to be completed by 1997. At this time, the Workforce Center areas will be remodeled to increase the space of the Resource Room and other areas intended for public use.

Anoka County Workforce Center staff and other partners believe that having space available at a relatively low cost at the Human Service Center is one of the most important underpinnings of the success of their project. Respondents were extremely pleased with the work of the building maintenance staff, and said that good building management "made all the difference," in providing a space that was clean and inviting. "If we had located in an old government-style building," said one person, "it wouldn't be the same. This place makes people feel good about coming here."

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

Since co-location of core Workforce Center partners in 1991, and particularly since the official Workforce Center partnership was formed in 1995, there have been on-going efforts to coordinate and integrate functions. Integration efforts, which are based on the principle of a "partnership of equals," have been focused on core agency practices in six major areas: intake, assessment and career planning, job search, training, case management, and employer services. Although not all of these functions are cross-staffed by employees of the different agencies represented at the Workforce Center, activities in each of these areas are coordinated through multi-agency Operations Committees (see "Communication and Coordination" and "Integrated Services" above).

To coordinate the design and delivery of services to welfare recipients, cross-agency teams composed of staff from Income Maintenance, Child Care Assistance, the Job Training Center (which delivers welfare-to-work services), and Job Services have been initiated. Integrated team supervisors meet regularly in a welfare-to-work "steering committee" co-chaired by directors of the Job Training Center, Income Maintenance, and Child Care Assistance to discuss questions of further integrating service delivery. In addition, a welfare-to-work "planning committee" comprised of front-line and supervisory staff also meets to coordinate such activities as integrated job search and employer services.

At the time of the site visit the following staffing arrangements were in effect:

- Reception is jointly staffed by ACJTC and Income Maintenance. Receptionists direct individuals seeking program services to intake staff who are also located in the reception area. Other customers wishing to access "universal" services such as computer-assisted resume preparation, labor market information, and information on education and training providers are directed to the Resource Room or other appropriate areas within the Center.
- ES/UI staff are responsible for intake services for the general public (those not directly referred to other service providers at the Center). Staff make an initial determination of program eligibility and provide an orientation to Center services, going over the "menu" of services offered with each individual. After an initial eligibility determination has been made, customers are registered for Unemployment Insurance, Job Service, Older Worker or Senior Community Service Employment

Program (SCSEP) programs as appropriate or referred to other programs for which they may be eligible.

- Services available to the general public are generally cross-staffed by several agencies. For example, Job Service and ACJTC staff work in teams to staff the Career Resource Center. They are assisted in this on a part-time basis by counselors from the Education Opportunity Center and by DRS staff who provide information on rehabilitation services and employer requirements for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ACJTC staff also provide a three-day Career Exploration Workshop for the general public. ACJTC and ES/UI staff jointly provide a variety of job search seminars which range from two-hour "mini-seminars" to full-day sessions (see "Services to Individual Customers" below).
- ACJTC staff provide employment and training service for individuals who qualify for all JTPA programs. In addition, through a contractual arrangement with the Income Maintenance Department, they provide employment and training services to participants in welfare-to-work programs such as the Food Stamp E&T program, STRIDE (JOBS), Community Work Experience Program (CWEP), the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), and the Parent's Fair Share program.
- DRS staff provide services to customers directly referred to them by outside organizations and to walk-in customers expressing interest in receiving DRS services.

Capacity Building

Although MDES's Office of Training and Learning Resources offers a regular schedule of classes in St. Paul for front-line, supervisory and management staff, Anoka staff indicated that they did not often have a chance to attend many of these courses. Because of a large demand for training, state training staff have recently begun to offer half- and full-day sessions on-site in Anoka on topics such as labor market information customized for the local area and training for Workforce Center staff. The Anoka Center has also contracted with the local community-technical college to offer "train the trainer" workshops on large-group presentation skills. Capacity-building workshops have also been held at Anoka by private vendors such as Greg Newton.

Although the original three partners of the Workforce Center have been co-located since 1991, respondents indicated that the "real work" of trying to coordinate service delivery began after December, 1994, when the Job Training Center, Job Service, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services saw themselves as "literally thrown together" in formulating a proposal for local One-Stop implementation. Beginning in

1995, local partners conducted a series of workshops intended to provide overviews of programs to staff from other agencies. Although some staff indicated that the amount of information provided at these sessions was "a bit overwhelming," most felt that since that time they had gained a good understanding of the programs of partner agencies.

More importantly, staff felt that because of the formalization of relations of partner agencies under the Workforce Center, they were able to gain first-hand knowledge of programs by working on various operations committees and by being in daily contact with staff from partner agencies. "Before there was nothing formal," said one Job Training Center staff person. "Now there is much more cooperation among partners that happens as a part of everyday operations." Another respondent put it this way:

> There are many different ideas about what cross-training means. Here, we interpret cross-training as informing people about what we do. It doesn't mean that everybody does case management, or that we could do someone else's job. I think 'cross-inform' is a more accurate description of what we do. We perform a lot of duties together, and we have built a process that is a much better relay system. All of us know each other's business.
>
> Perhaps the most important change is that because of the implementation of the Workforce Center concept, we can attach what was before only somebody's name to a person. We all feel free to go next door [to our partners] to ask questions. Before, some people might have considered that 'intruding on their space.' Everyone's made a commitment not to schedule their days too tightly so that they have time for interacting. This has been a great benefit to our customers. If we see that they have a specific need, we can introduce them to someone that can help.

The relatively recent inclusion of the Income Maintenance Department and Child Care Assistance as core Center partners, the passage of welfare reform legislation, and the planned move of 60 additional income maintenance case workers to the Center during 1997 has resulted in the formation and training of cross-agency teams to consolidate planning and delivery of services for what are now five distinct welfare-to-work programs: (1) Food Stamp Employment and Training; (2) Community Work Experience Program for two-parent AFDC families; (3) STRIDE for AFDC recipients; (4) ACCESS, a program that offers child-care subsidies to non-STRIDE participants; and (5) the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), a program that offers various work incentives to welfare-to-work customers. Teams composed of staff from

Income Maintenance, Child Care Assistance, and the Job Training Center have undergone several days of team-building training led by outside consultants. Training has consisted of principles of team formation and structure, laying ground-rules for team meetings, personality assessment, and coping with change.

It is expected that capacity building efforts will be enhanced in mid-1997 with the launching of a "Workforce Excellence Initiative" funded by the McKnight foundation and the U.S. Department of Labor, and developed jointly by MDES and the state's JTPA Association. The objectives of this initiative include (1) finding effective ways to combine resources in Workforce Centers to create model partnerships among federal, state, local, and private organizations; (2) promoting customer satisfaction and continuous improvement; providing training and technical assistance to all Workforce Centers partners; and (3) introducing best practices through replication of products and resources developed throughout the country.[6]

As a result of a strong emphasis on cross-training and coordination of activities across multiple agency partners, staff identification with individual partner agencies is becoming less strong. For example, at conferences attended by inter-agency teams, it has become common for staff to introduce themselves as working for the Anoka Workforce Center, rather than for the particular agency that employs them. Staff proudly point to the fact that their name-tags refer only identify themselves as staff of the Minnesota Workforce Center - Anoka County, and that it is difficult for customers or visitors to distinguish what person works for which agency.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The State of Minnesota is part of GEORGE, the multi-state consortium working to develop integrated intake and to create electronic tools to manage clients' One-Stop activities after they have proceeded through the intake process. This integrated information system would allow One-Stop "case managers" to schedule client flow, take case notes, develop work plans for customers, and plan transition services.

Local Workforce Center partner staff have developed a common three-page application on which preliminary program eligibility determinations are based. They are hopeful that new state-developed MIS will enable them to further streamline local information systems in order to provide more easily accessible client-level data across programs, rather than focusing so heavily on programmatic reporting needs. "A lot is geared toward filling out end reports," said one respondent. "The system is not really geared to providing us with useful information."

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[6] Further details on this initiative are included in the Minnesota state profile.

At the same time, the establishment of a Workforce Center has made it easier to share information. Before integration of services, sharing data was more difficult—early problems often revolved around varying interpretations of Minnesota data privacy laws. Recent clarifications at the state level have since, in the words of several local staff, "freed people to be more practical." Staff see the focus as the *strategic* and *permissible* sharing of information. County files, for example, are now accessible to ES/UI staff on an "as-needed" basis.

One of the major tasks of bridging MIS across programs involves other technical issues such as determining the most effective ways to link communication systems. There is the presumption that Workforce Center partners will eventually share a single file server, a single leased communication line, and shared network resources through the state's communication network, MNET.

Labor Market Information (LMI) and Related Information Technology Improvements

Local staff at Anoka were particularly pleased with improvements in the accessibility of labor market information since the implementation of One-Stop in Minnesota. Many Anoka staff persons attended a state-sponsored conference on LMI in September and were impressed by the quality of the presentations and the information that was made available to them.

One of the most direct benefits of One-Stop implementation has been the development and continuous expansion of the Resource Center. The Anoka Resource Center contains a well-stocked library that provides job-seekers with information about career areas and the outlooks for employment opportunities in those areas. Another direct benefit has come in the expansion of availability of computers that customers can use to access career and labor market information. As a result of expansion of computer access, customers have easy access not only to job listings and basic data on types of employment, wages, and labor market trends in the local area, but also to the Minnesota Career Information System (CIS), an easy-to-use computer-based encyclopedia on education and training programs available state-wide.

The recent creation by the state of six regional labor market analyst positions was seen by local respondents as a particularly positive development. The regional analyst for their area has been very helpful in providing assistance in conducting an inventory of materials, and in providing new materials for the Resource Center. Local staff stated that they felt very comfortable about contacting their regional analyst at any time to request LMI. One supervisor described the new improvements in LMI that had resulted since One-Stop implementation:

> There have been new materials developed since the Workforce Center concept has become implemented. For instance, the state has just packaged new materials that allow counseling staff to assess the quality and placement rates of any education or training program in the state. Before, we would have had to contact individual schools to get this kind of information. But I think the biggest improvement has been in our comfort levels with using LMI and improved access to information when we need it.

He described a recent case in which he had contacted the regional analyst for information about determining eligibility for a customer in a dislocated worker program:

> I had a printer who said that he needed full-time training, that he couldn't get a job without training. I knew that printing was a volatile industry, but I didn't have much specific information on the field. I called the regional analyst, and was able to get information on local area growth rates in that person's field very shortly afterwards. Before, I could have contacted someone at the state, but it would have taken me much more time to get the information I needed. In this case, I was able to make an eligibility determination within days.

Marketing

Another major change that has resulted from One-Stop implementation in Minnesota is the establishment of a "marketer" position at each Workforce Center. In Anoka, the marketer's duties include publicizing the services of the Workforce Center to job seekers and coordinating outreach efforts in the employer community.

The local marketer, in collaboration with operations committee staff, develops a variety of flyers, brochures, and media releases that describe the local Workforce Center services. In addition, local staff coordinate with Human Service Center partners in publishing materials that detail the range of services that are available to Anoka County residents at the Center. For example, a monthly calendar of scheduled workshop and resource area activities is printed and made available to customers.

Because of the state's increased emphasis on services to employers, one of the most important functions of the marketer is coordinating the system of account representatives that was developed by Job Service staff prior to the establishment of the Workforce Center in 1995. The marketer attends employer group meetings, such as those offered by Chambers of Commerce, and puts employers into contact with Job Service "account representatives." Because of current tight labor market conditions, many employers contact the marketer with urgent job requests. The marketer disseminates these requests throughout the Center, by circulating flyers to staff and posting them in public areas such as the Resource Center, and by sending e-mail messages to Center staff describing the available position.

Unemployment Insurance tax auditors are also performing new "marketing" duties in the context of the Anoka One-Stop. Because they come into contact with many employers in the course of insurance audits, the state has been promoting an expanded role for them in promoting workforce development services. Auditors are now encouraged to educate employers about the range of workforce services available to them, including funding for training of current and prospective employees, the use of the Center for conducting interviews, and information sessions for new employers on topics such as filing quarterly report forms, applying for an UI registration number, and calculating UI tax rates.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

The Anoka Workforce Center offers a range of services to customers, including self- and staff-assisted computerized services and individualized services. Core services for individuals available through the Center include:

- Computer-scanning of resumes for job matching;
- Job postings from area employers;
- Job hotlines and information and procedures on civil service recruitment;
- Registration for Job Service;
- Access to personal computers for resumes and cover letters;
- Telephones and answering service to support job search efforts;
- Group job search clubs;
- Career exploration through the Minnesota Career Information System;

- Labor market information; and
- Individual career guidance and assessment.

In addition, a variety of workshops are available at no cost to the general public. These workshops, jointly staffed by ES/UI and ACJTC employees, cover a range of career exploration and job search topics. Workshops are offered at regularly scheduled times on a weekly basis, and last from two hours to a full day. On topics for which several sessions are offered, participants may attend either or both "modules." Specific workshops offered at the Center include the following:

- *Tour of the Facilities.* This workshop on "Next Steps" introduces job seekers to the resources available at the Workforce Center, including computers, reference materials, and the "Job Club."
- *The Creative Job Search Basic Workshop* offers an overview of the emotional, attitudinal, and financial transition processes involved in employment transitions. This module is recommended as a prerequisite to the others.
- *Applying Skills to the Job Search* assists job seekers in learning to identify and speak about their skills and accomplishments in preparation for the interview process.
- *Written Credentials.* Offered in two modules , these workshops focus on the variety of techniques used in writing resumes, cover letters, and follow-up letters.
- *Applications and References.* Job seekers are taught how to match their experiences and skills with those required by employers on application forms, and how to identify the most suitable persons to list as references.
- *Interviewing.* In the first session on this topic, participants learn about key interview questions and legal rights, and practice interviewing techniques. In the second session, up to ten participants are videotaped in 5-minute mock interview sessions.
- *The Hidden Job Market.* The first of these sessions discusses the variety of methods used to find jobs, including networking, responding to advertisements, and contacting agencies and companies. In a subsequent session, job seekers learn how to use the telephone in the job search—they prepare a script and contact employers during the workshop.

Other services, available to individuals eligible for categorical programs, include services available through all JTPA programs, Title V Older Workers Programs, Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET), Minnesota Parents' Fair Share, Community

Work Experience Program, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Employment and Training Services, Rehabilitation Services, State Services For The Blind, and STRIDE programs for welfare recipients.

Services for Employer Customers

Employer services in Anoka County are intended to support local employers in their efforts to "maintain economic stability and provide employment opportunities to job seekers in the community." In order to accomplish these goals, the state has sought to re-focus efforts on services to employers. At the Anoka Center, this is being accomplished in three ways: (1) through the institution of a system of employer "account representatives," (2) through increased outreach into employer communities using marketing activities and participation in employer associations, and (3) by adding an "educational" or marketing aspect to the work of the Unemployment Insurance's Random Audit Unit, as described in the section on "Marketing," above.

Job Service has designated five staff to act as employer account representatives. Although the function of the representatives is similar to the function carried out by the previous Job Service "interviewers," the increased emphasis on employer services has changed the proportion of time that is spent courting employers. Job Service interviewers used to spend the majority of their time with individual customers, whereas employer account representatives now spend most of their time on activities targeted to employers. These include more intensive screening of prospective employees for specific job openings, sending letters and visiting employers, attending Chamber of Commerce meetings, holding "Job Fairs," and increasing the Center's visibility in the community. Activities are coordinated by the marketer.

Staff respondents identified major advantages to the new emphasis on employer services. According to one Job Service respondent, advantages of the new system include:

- *Preventing duplication of effort in job placement contacts to employers* as a result of improved communication across all employer service staff and use of a shared employer database.
- *Promoting coordination with vocational and technical colleges on providing job assessment services to local employers*, using the "Work Keys" system, in which Job Service staff have been trained.

- *Streamlining employer services*, by sharing job orders from "desperate employers" across all partner agencies. This has enabled the Center to provide timely referrals to employers seeking new staff.
- *Addressing employers' need for good labor market information*, including providing information to employers considering relocating to the county, as a result of information that can be accessed by Job Service staff over the Internet.
- *An increased ability to visit employers at their worksites*, which enables employer service representatives to have a much clearer understanding of employers and their needs and personalizes the service relationship.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

Customers receiving a wide range of services at the Center were invited to a focus group discussion. Several of the respondents had participated in the "Customer Services Advisory Group" described earlier in this profile. The focus group was also attended by two staff members of the Advisory Group, a JS/UI representative, and a Job Training Center vocational counselor. In addition, a job placement specialist from Rise, Inc., was in attendance. Customer respondents included a woman whose son had received assistance from the Division of Rehabilitation Services, several STRIDE program participants, a participant in UI Profiling and Worker Reemployment Services, and several dislocated worker program participants.

Many of the focus group respondents, particularly those with previous experience with Job Service or welfare-to-work services noted that a strong customer service orientation had developed at the Workforce Center. Nearly all respondents believed that Workforce Center staff treated them as individuals. Some commented that they no longer felt that they were being "categorized" by programs they participated in, and many others commented on the dignity and respect that they were accorded at the Center. Below are four brief excerpts from the group discussion.

According to one participant in the STRIDE program for AFDC recipients, there was much less of a stigma attached to receiving help at the Workforce Center:

> The thing that has gotten better is the quality of service, the respect that people give you. Before, you really felt the hatred toward you, the disgust that you were receiving public assistance.

Another respondent, who had received Social Security Disability payments for 16 years, had this to say about the evolution of the workforce system in Anoka:

> It used to be very hard to get any kind of service through Job Service. If you wanted to access State job leads, they'd funnel you back through Rehabilitation Services. Job Service would treat you as if you were unemployable. It shouldn't be like that. Everybody should be treated as if they could do something. There has been a big improvement in attitude. There is an attitude of cooperation that didn't exist before.

One woman whose son had received Rehabilitation Services for over a decade had this to say:

> I have seen a big change over the years and through talking to people here. I know that if you come in here looking for work, the staff really care and they'll help you figure out what to do. This Center has definitely made a big difference.

Another respondent had this to say about her perception of "seamless services" and "universality" at the Center:

> One thing I like about this place, is that you're treated as an individual. You don't have to have a problem to want to come here. You're not automatically categorized - pegged into one strange little group or another. There are a lot of resources that can be used by the general public, not just for people needing special services.

Employers

As a result of the changes in job seeker and employer services, staff respondents indicated that employers are now much happier about the job applicants referred to them:

> "They tell us that the quality of job applicants is improving. By spending time on 'quality initiatives' asking employers different questions about their needs, through better preparation, better transition workshops that help job seekers understand their own skills, we are also doing a much better job in serving employers."

An employer focus scheduled during the site visit was attended by only two individuals, both of whom were members of the local Job Service's Employer Council (JSEC). One was the human resource manager for a large food distribution company. The other was an employee of Rise, Inc., which is an agency that assists individuals with disabilities to obtain private sector employment. The food distribution company, which is headquartered in Houston and has 69 operations branches throughout the country, employs 580 people in neighboring Ramsey County. The human resources director of this company described her experiences working with Center staff:

> Our company has found that the Department of Economic Security offers a lot of useful services. We know that they can do on-site training for workers that lose their jobs, help them to write resumes. We have an account representative here now. Before we'd fax openings to about 30 different places. Now we mostly just send them here. They're able to do most of the screening we need. For example, we need a lot of drivers. They're able to verify that drivers have the right qualifications, a commercial driver's license, enough experience, and so forth, before they send them out to us.

Rise Inc. has worked closely with the Workforce Center in helping develop "job-readiness, job-seeking, and job-keeping skills" among people with disabilities or other serious barriers to employment. The representative had this to say about some of the changes that came about with the creation of the Human Service Center:

> The Department has become much more user-friendly. I remember several years ago showing up for my first meeting with staff. I needed to know where to go, but I just got barked at. Now the whole atmosphere is different with the new Workforce Center. People feel comfortable. I appreciate what it means to lose a job. I had to apply for unemployment insurance in 1988. It was such a humiliating experience to ask for money. If I hadn't needed it, I would have waked right out of the door. Things are so different now. You can get help with doing resume searches. There are just a lot more services for employers and for job applicants. It's really nice that so many things are located in one building like child care, a clinic, and WIC programs. People now have one place where they can go instead of running all around.

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN AND LESSONS LEARNED

Staff at the Anoka County Workforce Center see themselves as being "ahead of the curve" in anticipating the national move toward One-Stop Centers. They see national and state priorities as "validating" their decision to co-locate and coordinate services. They realize that bringing several agencies together is a difficult task, but one that they have been able to accomplish successfully through the institution of a variety of communication and coordination mechanisms. According to one respondent, the process of "taking stock" of the variety of workforce related programs, and designing a system based on the strengths that each partner brings, has been the most important priority for Center staff and management.

Most staff respondents believed that although the major impetus for the development of the local One-Stop came from the local level, much of what they had recently accomplished was facilitated by the both the federal and state emphasis on integrating services in One-Stops. Several respondents pointed to the "philosophical commitment" of the current MDES Commissioner as making a big difference: "Her approach is a big switch from the way that we used to do things," said one staff member. "It does not mean that integration is easy. We had a lot of fights, a lot of mistrust, particularly at the beginning. But if we ticked somebody off, we made sure that we put the issue on the table. Once issues were out in the open, they were easier to deal with."

Staff also believe that integration was easier to accomplish at the local level than it was at the state or national levels. "It's helpful to understand how systems at the state level are put together," said one key respondent. "We're putting together things that are not put well together at 390 [MDES Headquarters in St. Paul]. It's hard for them to see out of their stovepipes—they don't see clients."

The commitment to shared leadership among workforce partners at the Center has facilitated the transition of the Anoka Center to a well-developed One-Stop that is well positioned to integrate future welfare-to-work and school-to-work initiatives. There has been a strong emphasis on maintaining regular and open lines of communication among Workforce Center partners and other providers of support services through forums such as advisory groups, a steering committee, and operations committees. There are now greater opportunities for staff input through the committee structure, and several Center employees indicated believe that their suggestions result in more useful services to their employer- and job-seeking customers.

Staff at the Anoka Center have challenged themselves to create a new structure for workforce development, while at the same time maintaining their focus on high-quality customer service under conditions of diminishing resources. According to one key staff person, "We're serving more people, and at the same time we've stepped ahead of the wave. . . We created our own ideas on how to make the system work."

APPENDIX Q

STATE OF OHIO
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During August, 1996

STATE OF OHIO
One-Stop Profile

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STATE OF OHIO
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

Earlier in this decade, Ohio began to build the basic policy framework from which its One-Stop system would be launched. In 1991, the governor appointed a Human Resources Advisory Council to review the status and assess the proliferation of workforce development programs. The Advisory Council's report, *Windows of Opportunity,* concluded that one billion dollars was being allocated to 15 different state agencies responsible for the 51 different direct employment and skills development programs, with only limited cross-program coordination. The governor then charged the Human Resources Advisory Council with developing a comprehensive "agency coordination" plan. The Council's blueprint for interagency coordination was laid out in its subsequent report called *Jobs: Ohio's Future.*

In 1993, the governor formed the Governor's Human Resources Investment Council (GHRIC), whose overriding agenda has been the "effective provision and coordination of economic development, education and human resource investment services, maximizing funds and avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort." While *Jobs: Ohio's Future* continues to be the guiding plan for overall consolidation of workforce development services, another report—*For the Common Good*—emphasizes the importance of strengthening the linkages between workforce development programs and education and training programs targeted to at-risk youth and welfare-dependent adults, using interagency "linkage teams."

Together, these planning documents provide a basic blueprint for preparing Ohio's workforce for the twenty-first century. The statewide workforce goals expressed in these documents include the following:

- to make Ohio businesses more competitive in the global marketplace;
- to ensure that all Ohioans achieve the skills and abilities needed to succeed in a high performance workplace; and
- to help all citizens to become self-sufficient.

The long-term goal of Ohio's One-Stop initiative is to develop an integrated service delivery system that provides access to multiple core employment and training services utilizing a systems approach that embraces multiple models for one-stop service delivery including co-location and no-wrong-door models based on local needs and local design. Partners in local One-Stop systems will use electronic linkages to share information across programs. From whatever point they enter the system, customers should encounter a single or universal registration process, staff that have been cross-trained, and access to self-service tools.

However, rather than attempting to transform its diverse local service delivery systems immediately according to a single consolidated "One-Stop" model, Ohio is encouraging each local area to decide how to build on existing programs and partnerships and what organizational configurations will work best for them, given the mix of programs and services already in place. Because state policymakers recognize the importance of variations in local labor market conditions and other local features, they emphasize that One-Stop delivery systems will also vary from locality to locality. State respondents believe that local One-Stop employment and training delivery systems must be "locally driven" to be effective. To ensure that local systems are responsive to local citizenry as well as to the state's workforce development goals, the state has determined that One-Stop systems must be designed and developed via a state/local partnership in which all partners have "joint commitment, responsibility and liability."

Several factors are influencing how the One-Stop system in Ohio is taking shape: (1) the diversity of the state's economy; (2) a tradition of local autonomy in the delivery of training, employment, and human services; and (3) the state's emphasis on developing networked One-Stop *systems*, rather than integrated career *centers*. Each of these factors is briefly described below.

- *The diversity of the state's economy*. Ohio is a large state that encompasses striking economic contrasts. On the one hand, the state has several large relatively prosperous metropolitan centers that have emerged from the recession of the late 1980's and early 1990's with low unemployment rates. On the other hand, the state also contains sparsely populated areas with high unemployment rates where recovery from severe economic dislocations has not taken place. For example, large urban areas such as Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus contrast sharply with rural southeastern Ohio, where the economy is still devastated by the decline of the coal mining industry. As a result of these dramatic differences in regional economies, the workforce development challenges faced by different regions are very different.

- *A tradition of local autonomy.* Due to the state's economic, social, and cultural diversity, state leadership believes that it is critical for local stakeholders to decide how the training, employment, and human services delivery system will be developed and implemented, within broad parameters developed by the state. Furthermore, Ohio currently has 30 SDAs, 76 local offices of OBES, 88 counties, and other locally configured employment and training delivery systems. Rather than imposing a standardized One-Stop framework on top of these diverse institutions, the state calls for the creation of local governing bodies that have the authority to shape the local one-stop system to meet local needs. While this may result in a slower decision-making process, it nevertheless guarantees that all will have a voice in the design of the local system.
- *The use of a "system" approach.* As indicated earlier, Ohio is allowing local areas to develop their own system boundaries and then to determine what will constitute the One-Stop service delivery "system" within those boundaries. The state requires each local system to provide at least one One-Stop center where core One-Stop services will be available. The local system may also include independent service sites for all participating partners.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

Policy Oversight and Governance. The state supports One-Stop system development throughout Ohio by developing the guidelines that influence local One-Stop system development, making decisions about the allocation of One-Stop Implementation Grant funds to local areas, and monitoring and supporting local progress in system implementation. The state is also responsible for certifying local One-Stop systems.

Several different entities are involved in implementing and overseeing Ohio's One-Stop approach at the state level, including (1) the Governor's Human Resources Investment Council (GHRIC), (2) the One-Stop Standing Committee of the GHRIC, (3) Statewide Interagency Work Teams and (4) a One-Stop Project Management Team within the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services.[1] These entities and their roles are described below.

The major policy body for state workforce development programs and issues is the Governor's Human Resources Investment Council (GHRIC), which was formed in 1993 in response to the Job Training Reform Amendments of 1992. Its thirty-one members include representatives from business, labor, education, and community leadership. As described previously, the Council is responsible for overseeing the delivery of cost-effective services in the areas of economic development, education, and human investment services with particular attention to promoting coordination and avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort across multiple programs and funding streams.

The One-Stop Standing Committee of the GHRIC was established as one of four GHRIC standing committees in order to deal with specific One-Stop development issues and to provide the advocacy needed to move this important program forward. The creation of this oversight body as an arm of the GHRIC has enabled the Committee to overcome many obstacles and barriers to the implementation of a One-Stop system because of the key positions that the GHRIC members hold in the overall employment and training arena. The One-Stop Standing Committee takes the lead in encouraging state agencies to develop coordination agreements to further One-Stop implementation, reviews the work of the Statewide Interagency Work Teams (described below), and is responsible for making recommendations to the GHRIC about the certification of local One-Stop systems.

A state-level One-Stop Workgroup monitors and supports the implementation and ongoing operation of One-Stop systems in Ohio. Each of the state agencies and departments involved in One-Stop system development is represented on the Ohio One-Stop Workgroup. The Workgroup plays a direct, "hands-on" role in the day-to-day planning and development of the One-Stop system. It has direct responsibility for One-Stop development and implementation and reports to the GHRIC One-Stop Standing Committee. Statewide Interagency Work Teams led by members of the Statewide One-

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[1] A Statewide One-Stop Workgroup was a precursor to the GHRIC One-Stop Committee and no longer exists. It was the original state level planning body and included representation from the same partner and stakeholder groups as are now represented on the GHRIC One-Stop Committee.

Stop Workgroup have the responsibility for dealing with specific policy and implementation issues that are statewide in nature.

As the lead state agency involved in the One-Stop initiative and the grant recipient of the DOL One-Stop Implementation Grant, the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) houses a One-Stop Project Management Team that oversees the DOL grant and provides technical assistance and consultation to local sites, including assistance related to team-building and local governance. The One-Stop Team Manager is responsible to the GHRIC One-Stop Committee and serves at the pleasure of the Governor, but reports to the OBES Administrator, since OBES is the lead state agency in Ohio's One-Stop effort.

State Agency Partners. At the local level, the state has established a hierarchical classification of One-Stop partners, consisting of (1) mandated partners, (2) optional or desirable partners, and (3) encouraged partners. The mandated One-Stop partners in each local area include the agencies responsible for JTPA, ES, Veterans Employment Services, UI and Title V of the Older Americans Act. The state agencies associated with the mandated local partners include the following.

- *The Ohio Bureau of Employment Services* (OBES) is the agency responsible for the Job Training Partnership Act programs, Employment Service programs, Veterans' Employment Services, and Unemployment Insurance. As the lead agency of the state One-Stop initiative, OBES co-chairs the Statewide GHRIC One-Stop Committee.
- *The Ohio Department of Aging* is the state agency that oversees local "aging" networks that receive funds to provide Senior Community Service Employment Programs to seniors under Title V of the Older Americans Act.

The second tier of potential One-Stop partners are defined as "optional or desirable" partners. The state has defined the agencies responsible for the following programs as optional or desirable partners in each local area: (1) welfare reform and welfare-to-work programs, (2) vocational education, (3) adult basic education and literacy programs, and (4) two-year colleges (vocational technical schools and community colleges). Local areas interested in One-Stop certification must involve partners responsible for three of the four optional program areas. State agencies responsible for "additional mandatory" programs include the following.

- *The Ohio Department of Human Services* oversees the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Program and other welfare-to-work programs administered in Ohio by county welfare agencies.
- *The Vocational and Career Education Division of the Ohio Department of Education* oversees secondary and adult vocational education programs available to adults in Ohio through public school systems. In addition, a total of 35 Vocational Education Full Service centers offer workforce training, employee testing and assessment, technical skills training, customized training, and job placement services to unemployed and under-employed adults.
- *The Adult Basic and Literacy Education Programs Division of the Ohio Department of Education* oversees adult basic and literacy education programs in Ohio. A statewide network of school districts, institutions, and community agencies provides direct services to learners. The state recently established a statewide literacy resource center at Kent State University that provides information and assistance to employers and service providers.
- *The Ohio Board of Regents* oversees the operation of public two-year colleges. Two-year colleges in Ohio include both vocational technical institutions and community colleges.

The third tier of potential One-Stop partners are defined as "encouraged partners." Partners encouraged at the local level include the agencies responsible for (1) vocational rehabilitation, (2) school-to-work transition programs, (3) the Ohio Industrial Training Program—a state-funded program that awards grants to private employers to upgrade the skills of their current workers, and (4) other community programs that provide support services, such as day care, transportation, and housing assistance to disadvantaged residents. State agencies responsible for these programs include the following.

- *The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission* administers vocational rehabilitation services targeted to individuals with substantial physical or mental disabilities. Services include evaluation and employability planning, counseling and guidance, and occupational and financial assistance.
- *Ohio's School-to-Work transition project,* is a multi-agency collaborative effort led by the Lieutenant Governor's Office, oriented to improve the alignment between school and work. The School-to-Work team is comprised of state legislators, employers, organized labor, the Department of Education, the Department of Human Services, the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, and other stakeholders. At the time of the site visit, 11 pilot projects were operating in the state to test

different service models. The School-to-Work team is represented on the GHRIC One-Stop Standing Committee. Its presence ensures that School-to-Work planning will be aligned with One-Stop system development.

- *The Ohio Department of Development* administers the Ohio Industrial Training Program. This state-funded program supports training for incumbent workers. One part of the program places economically disadvantaged individuals in employment supported by job- and classroom-based occupational training.

State Framework for Local Governance

It is the state's goal to integrate and incorporate as many employment and training programs into local One-Stop systems as possible, while still providing some flexibility at the local level. Local areas are given substantial discretion in designing entities to govern their One-Stop systems. The state requires that whatever governing body is designated, it include all key stakeholders in the local One-Stop system, including mandatory, optional, and encouraged partners. The local governance structure for One-Stop systems must have participation from employer and job-seeker customers, business, organized labor, and local elected officials. Localities must also demonstrate a strong linkage with the local Job Service Employer Committee (JSEC) and between the JSEC and the Private Industry Council, to ensure that local employers will be strongly connected to the new employment and training system.

Local areas may use their Private Industry Council (PIC) as the governance structure for their One-Stop system, but the JTPA administrative role of PICs must be kept separate from their One-Stop policy function. In addition, local areas are required to establish linkages between their local One-Stop system and existing coordination initiatives, including the local School-to-Work initiative, Vocational Education Full Service Programs (described above under state vocational education partners), and Common Good teams.[2]

Ohio describes the process of developing local One-Stop systems as a process of developing state and local agreements about how services will be provided, how service providers will be selected, how customers will be assisted and how the One-Stop system will be financed. Thus, agreement about the local governance structure is only one step in negotiating a series of agreements about the future of local workforce development services.

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[2] Common Good teams were established in 1989 under the auspices of Ohio Department of Education. Originally the focus was on establishing linkages between welfare-to-work and education programs. The local Common Good teams have since evolved to include all the major employment and training partners. There are 35 local teams currently in existence in various parts of the state.

DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of the Design

The federally-funded One-Stop initiative builds on and furthers existing state initiatives. By the time Ohio received official DOL designation as a One-Stop implementation state, the state had already begun to develop and implement a strategic plan to promote the consolidation of employment and training services so as to reduce costs and inefficiencies. The initial strategy, developed and implemented by the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES), called for the creation of Customer Service Centers (CSCs), which would consolidate service delivery for the ES and UI programs using integrated application forms and cross-trained staff. Additional local workforce development programs were also invited to co-locate with ES/UI in CSCs. Though less sweeping in its scope than the One-Stop initiative, the move to create Customer Service Centers was an important precursor of One-Stop in Ohio.

OBES Customer Service Centers remain a "key component" of local One-Stop designs. At the time of the evaluation site visit, seven Customer Service Centers were operational and nine additional Centers were in the process of development or renovation. All local areas are required to involve existing CSCs in local One-Stop system-building efforts. Some CSCs may also be used as test sites to pilot the use of an enhanced Ohio Job Net system to provide automated One-Stop services as part of an integrated statewide system.

Another experience that was influential in building collaborative partnerships among state and local employment and training representatives was the development of Ohio's plan to implement a Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) system. Ohio's process for designing this system brought together state and local service providers to discuss how to utilize existing resources to best meet the needs of dislocated workers. As a result of this design process, representatives from the employment, training, and human services sectors experienced the potential for working together without "turf" issues being paramount. The development of the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services plan used a consensus-based team-building process that combined program design ideas provided by local partners with support provided by state-level systems. The successful experience planning the WPRS system provided state policy makers with the impetus and the determination to move forward with the group's One-Stop vision. A similar interagency collaborative process was used to develop the state's One-Stop Implementation Grant application to DOL.

Ohio's vision for transforming local workforce development systems includes designing and delivering services that:

- offer customer choice and promote customer satisfaction;
- address the full range of customer needs and goals;
- are viewed by customers as seamless high quality services;
- are delivered using systems that are cost-effective and cost-efficient;
- satisfy the current performance goals and standards for existing programs.

As indicated earlier, Ohio's One-Stop vision is that local systems must be designed to meet the specific needs of customers and harness the specific resources available in each local labor market. A fundamental requirement of the state design is that the mandatory local partners must reach agreement on the local design before seeking One-Stop funding from the state. To guide local partners in the development of their own local agreements, the state has established a set of "certification parameters." The certification parameters described below are used to review the applications from local areas for funding to support the implementation of their One-Stop "systems."

- *Geographic boundaries*. While Ohio expects to eventually have a One-Stop Career Center system in each of its 30 SDAs, it has left the development of the actual One-Stop system boundaries to the localities. Parameters established by the state for grant application include the following: each proposed multi-county system must include at least 200,000 residents, and the counties it comprises must be contiguous; to apply as a single-county system, a county must have 800,000 or more residents. Furthermore, all mandatory partners must agree when SDA lines are to be crossed by One-Stop system boundaries.
- *Local governance structure*. As described in the previous section, local governance structures must include representation from all local program partners. All key players must be in agreement about the local governance structure.
- *Mandatory partners/programs*. As previously described, agencies responsible for all DOL-funded programs are mandatory partners. Local systems must also obtain participation from three out of four

"optional" partners/programs including welfare-to-work, vocational education, adult basic education, and two-year colleges. Participation by agencies responsible for vocational rehabilitation, school-to-work, Ohio Industrial Training Program, and other local programs serving economically disadvantaged residents is encouraged, but not required. Where Customer Service Centers (described above) exist, they must be included as participating partners of the local One-Stop system.

- *Universal access to core services.* All One-Stop systems must provide the following basic core services: (1) customer-oriented information on careers, labor markets, jobs, and the availability of quality education and training programs; (2) testing and assessment; (3) information on the initial eligibility requirements of programs in the community; (4) information on job openings and hiring requirements; and (5) assistance with job search. Ohio's statewide automated job matching system—Ohio Job Net—must be available to all customers and local system plans must describe how the automated system will be used.

- *Integrated program delivery.* To meet the state's requirement for integrated services, at least one physical site within each local One-Stop system must qualify as a "One-Stop Center" by

  Services throughout local One-Stop systems, but particularly in One-Stop Centers with co-located partners, are to be provided in a seamless manner. Suggested strategies include: (1) integrated intake through the use of a system-wide common intake procedure; (2) the use of staff cross-trained in multiple programs and able to perform broad, rather than narrow, functions; (3) electronically shared information; and (4) integrated job development and job placement services across local partners.

- *Attention to the needs of special populations.* Localities must indicate how each special population will be served. Special populations will include veterans, dislocated workers, economically disadvantaged adults and youth, older workers, individuals with disabilities, and UI recipients. Local plans must also address how the One-Stop system will serve cash assistance recipients, in accordance with the state legislation on welfare reform.

- *Local match requirement.* Localities must commit an in-kind match of 10% of the federal One-Stop Implementation Grant funds received.

The state has also developed a procedure for evaluating whether an individual service site can be designated as a One-Stop "center." To qualify as a One-Stop center, a local site must provide information on and access to each of the mandatory programs—JTPA, ES, UI, Veterans Employment Services and Senior Community Services Employment Program—plus three of the four optional programs—welfare-to-work, vocational education, adult basic education, and public two-year colleges. To be designated One-Stop centers, local sites must also offer each of the required core services (described above) to all customers.

Thus, while the state permits substantial flexibility in the development of local One-Stop systems—including variation in the extent of co-location among participating partners—the parameters clearly call for system consolidation to emphasize the delivery of services that encompass a broad range of funding streams and programs and that are viewed as seamless from the customer perspective. The state guidelines for local designs raise issues that are sometimes complex. Here are some examples:

How to achieve a state-wide system given limited resources. Initially, Ohio planned to develop 30 local One-Stop systems (corresponding to the 30 existing JTPA service delivery areas) that would each build on existing JTPA and ES/UI service sites. Partners in each local area would redesign the services offered by existing sites within a local area to achieve customer-driven, user-friendly, seamless service, through a transformation process that emphasizes implementing electronic linkages, cross-training staff, and developing self-service opportunities. However, since DOL One-Stop implementation funding will not be available at the requested level and Ohio's administrative cutbacks have resulted in a reduction in the number of ES/UI offices, Ohio may find it difficult to support enough local sites to achieve a statewide system. Nevertheless, as it moves through the three-year implementation period, the state will work with the localities that go through the competitive bidding process, to determine what configurations might adequately serve local labor markets as well as providing Ohio with maximum geographic coverage.[3] In addition, the GHRIC One-Stop Committee is assessing the potential for seeking alternative funding, possibly from the state, for a fourth year of implementation to ensure that Ohio meets its goal of 30 systems, thus covering the entire state.

How to further the state vision using a variety of local partnership and service delivery configurations. The state has allowed local discretion in the configuration of the local governance structure, the number and types of programs to be integrated, the number and location of service sites within the One-Stop system, the relationships among different sites, and the selection of the One-Stop operator and fiduciary agent. Given this broad local discretion, Ohio may find it difficult to ensure that local One-Stop systems are furthering a common statewide and federal One-Stop vision. The GHRIC One-Stop Committee, however, continues to address the issues that will ensure that local systems further a common statewide and federal One-Stop vision.

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[3] Since 1988, 22 Ohio counties have been without a local office for the delivery of ES and UI services as a result of limited state funds. Because of this, the One-Stop selection process will encourage the geographic expansion of One-Stop systems to include under-served areas.

How to achieve active participation by all the desired local partners. It is difficult enough to consolidate policies and procedures among different DOL programs administered by the same state agency. Ohio's vision of integrating services across a broad range of local partners and programs is very ambitious.

How to achieve integrated service delivery across program partners. Ohio has recognized that it will take time to develop and/or expand integrated services. Each of the following subsystems will be phased in as they are completed and ready for implementation:

- *Integrated customer information* will facilitate common registration by providing access to customer information on the participating program databases.
- *Customer record of service* will track an individual's progress across various employment and training programs in relation to his or her employment plan.
- *Training quality information* will provide information on the completion, retention and success rates of students enrolled in various training institutions.
- *Ohio Job Net* will be enhanced to provide a single point of access for labor exchange services.
- *Labor market information* will provide comprehensive information regarding occupational trends and projects.

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals

Although the state One-Stop design defers many of the details of One-Stop system design to the localities, state-level respondents say that Ohio has not lost sight of how its design supports the four federal One-Stop goals.

Universal Access

Ohio encourages localities to be creative in designing their systems to provide services relevant to the population they are serving. Through its local One-Stop systems, Ohio intends to provide universal access to the following core services to all population groups:

- Intake and assessment and testing for programs offered by mandatory partners (e.g., ES, UI, JTPA, Veterans' Employment Services, and Older Worker programs);
- Orientation and information on all employment and training services available within the geographical area including job openings, job referrals, and job search assistance and placement services;
- Quality labor market information, including data on labor market trends, careers, job categories, and skills needed for the local labor market;
- Assistance with initial UI claims.

While One-Stop systems are not required to provide additional services to the general population, Ohio does give extra points in its One-Stop grant application review process to local sites that offer additional core services that include 1) in-depth assessment and counseling, 2) case management, 3) training, and/or 4) skill validation to certify qualifications of job applicants.

Customer Choice

The intent of Ohio's design is to provide customer choice in three major ways: (1) providing the information needed to make informed choices; (2) making it possible to access information at multiple locations within the local One-Stop system; and (3) providing the option of using self-service means of accessing services.

Providing information is seen by Ohio as key to individual self-empowerment. Therefore, much of the systems development during the next three years will focus on developing improved ways to provide user-friendly information. Products in development include a system for gaining easy access to Job Net and the Internet—which is Ohio's skills-based automated job matching system—and integrating Job Net with information on additional employment and training services and partners. In addition, the Ohio Career Information System (OCIS) will provide information on training providers, including information available through the National Center for Education Studies.

Self-service options will include electronic linkages and the use of out-stationed staff and/or cross-trained staff to assist in the self-service process. Multiple self-service stations will be available, including kiosks in libraries and at One-Stop centers.

Interactive voice response is also planned for UI customers. In addition the OCIS will be available as part of the automated LMI system.

Integrated Services

Ohio views integration of services as having the customers' needs as the ultimate focus. The state wants local sites to integrate as many employment and training programs as possible but to include only those optional programs that make sense in the local environment. As defined by the state, the requirement for integration of services is met if at least one physical location in each local system provides customers with information on all participating programs and provides program access through intake, assessment, and preliminary eligibility assessment. The actual direct delivery of services—such as in-depth assessment, testing, counseling, training, job search assistance, etc.—does not need to be provided at the One-Stop site. However, in rating local area applications, the state will give priority to sites that provide maximum direct service delivery at the One-Stop center.

Ohio is in the process of developing tools that localities can use in integrating services. Various integration tools are in different stages of planning and implementation.

- *A model orientation workshop* is being developed as part of Ohio's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services. This model workshop may also be used to serve a broader One-Stop population.
- *A "rolling common intake" plan* is being developed to facilitate easy access to customer information by the various partner programs. Once in place, each customer will have to provide information only once in order to activate his/her application.
- *A customer "record of service"* will be integrated into a tracking system that will provide information on services provided as well as outcomes achieved. This system will follow the client through his/her various interactions with the employment and training system and will also be used for performance measurement.
- The state also encourages local areas to *cross-train staff to carry out broader cross-program functions*, in order to provide seamless services and facilitate the "no wrong door" approach. State efforts to support staff training are described in a later section.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Final performance guidelines and goals were left purposely vague in Ohio's One-Stop implementation proposal to DOL, with the intent that a performance plan would be developed in the first year. As part of the performance plan, state One-Stop partners would study the issues and make recommendations to the GHRIC.

Once the state One-Stop implementation grant was received, a statewide Work Team was assigned to deal with the issues of program performance. Concerns included how to develop a performance measurement approach that will build on existing efforts, recognize local design variants, and adequately measure services to all customers of the One-Stop system. It was decided that in order to measure the success of the local One-Stop systems in a fair and equitable manner, interagency monitoring teams would conduct individualized on-site evaluations of the progress of each One-Stop site.

The Program Performance Work Team also undertook to recommend performance measures and methods for use across all local One-Stop systems. The Team identified three important areas that needed attention in the development of a system to measure One-Stop performance:

- *Customer service satisfaction* measures and the development of methodologies to assess customer and service satisfaction;
- *Measures of customer outcomes and performance* and reporting methods to support these measures;
- *Overall assessments of local system operation* to be performed by cross-program monitoring teams, along with assessment tools to be used by assessment teams for use by the teams and a method for collecting and organizing relevant information and providing it to the GHRIC One-Stop Committee.

As a result of its work in these areas, the statewide Program Performance Work Team recommended that the GHRIC One-Stop Committee adopt performance measures for each of the primary customers—employers and job seekers—centered around five goal areas. Exhibit 1 summarizes the recommended measures. The GHRIC approved these recommendations on an interim basis. They will also be reviewed by the legislature to determine whether they provide the information the legislature may wish to compile on the One-Stops.

During the second year of its One-Stop Implementation Grant, Ohio plans to establish the actual performance standards and adjustment processes, if any, and identify the consequences for sub-standard performance. The results of the performance measurement system will be published annually for each local one-stop

Exhibit 1

Recommended One-Stop Performance Measures for Job Seekers and Employers

Goal Areas	Employer Measures	Job Seeker Measures
Customer Satisfaction	• Five dimensions of service: awareness, convenience, service features, quality, and respect	• Five dimensions of service: awareness, convenience, service features, quality, and respect
Outcomes	• Number of job orders filled compared to job orders listed	• Employment 13 weeks after program and employment and wages/earnings and benefits 1 year after program
Tracked Information	• Diversity of jobs listed and job applicants • Of all new hires, percent listed/filled by One-Stop (market share) • Diversity of size of employers using system • Number of employers using system as a percent of market (by industry/region)	• Service equity: economic status, educational status, age, race, gender • Number of customers as a percentage of the population (market share)
Value Added	• Number of customers that achieved one or more skill enhancements (the enhancement should provide skills or credentials needed to achieve long-term employment)	
Cost–Benefit	• Decrease in UI Tax Rate (tracked information)	• Return on investment: total costs invested compared to the return on investment in terms of reductions in welfare benefits, time on welfare, UI payments, time on UI, and increases in earnings and tax revenues

system as well as for the state as a whole. The state will award "performance ratings" to each One-Stop system based on its achievements.

Ohio's performance management system is designed to be implemented in two phases, *basic and enhanced*. During the *basic* phase, local sites will use information currently available and continue to meet current reporting and performance requirements. In addition, the state is encouraging local sites to use locally-designed tools—like comment cards, focus groups and telephone surveys—to measure customer satisfaction. A new measure of integration of services called "services received" is also being created. This measure will count individuals who are tracked as moving into another program and who actually receive services from that program.

In preparation for the *enhanced* phase, the state will develop new procedures for tracking individuals and services across different programs through the use of shared, automated case management tools. During the enhanced phase, an integrated individual service plan will become the yardstick by which One-Stop successes will be measured. During this phase, more systematic and in-depth customer satisfaction assessments will be conducted. Assessments of customer satisfaction will be conducted semi-annually for each One-Stop area and performance levels will be indexed against state performance.

Having developed the necessary basic data elements for the recommended measures, the Program Performance Work Team is now working with the information technology division on developing the information systems and data management infrastructure to implement the planned system. In addition to obtaining feedback on possible information system designs from the local One-Stop "lead" staff, the Work Team will also be dealing with such long-range issues as who will collect the data and where it will be stored. Other challenges Ohio faces in regard to performance measurement include: (1) how performance will be measured for the self-service system (e.g., kiosks in libraries and malls); (2) how to resolve potential cross-program conflicts in the definitions of outcome and process measures, both for DOL-funded programs as well as for programs funded by different federal agencies; and (3) how to integrate information that is currently stored using dramatically different information systems maintained by the various education and training agencies participating in the One-Stop system.[4]

Program Performance Work Team participants interviewed for this study expressed concern about the lack of consistency between the measures proposed for evaluating the One-Stop system and the measures currently used to assess the different categorical programs. In order to conduct useful evaluations of One-Stop, they said, common definitions and common goals are needed throughout the entire system. Respondents are also concerned that decisions being made at the state and federal levels concerning welfare reform will have an important impact on what it will be important to measure and how the data will be collected. Despite the frustrations of dissimilar reporting measures and changing contexts, however, respondents expressed assurance that the customer satisfaction and other performance measures they have identified provide a solid foundation for measuring One-Stop success at both the local and state levels.

Communication and Coordination

The complexity of achieving the needed communication, collaboration, and cooperation among so many different agencies and counties has proven to be a massive task for Ohio. Information sharing is a key part of the system developed by Ohio to support such a large and complicated undertaking.

Ohio has designed its One-Stop system so that cross-agency communication among state-level partners takes place in the normal course of system planning and implementation efforts. Agency partners communicate through their representatives on the various Work Teams, in their reports and recommendations to the GHRIC One-Stop Committee and in their One-Stop Work Team meetings. In addition, information-sharing agreements have been developed at the state and local level to enable One-Stop partners improve the delivery of services to One-Stop customers. At the state level, the information-sharing agreement includes the major education and training agency partners: the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services and the Departments of Education, Aging, and Development. This agreement will be used as a model for the development of more specific local information-sharing agreements.

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[4] For example, the state Department of Education does not identify customers using social security numbers, and the community college system does not maintain a statewide database.

The State Project Management Team and Project Manager also play major roles in facilitating communication and coordination among partners at the state level and between the state and the local One-Stops. The Project Management Team ensures that the members of the GHRIC One-Stop Committee and the interagency Work Teams that oversee local One-Stop implementation and performance have sufficient information to perform their oversight functions. The Project Management Team also collects and disseminates summaries of interagency Work Team meetings, facilitates communication among state and local One-Stop actors and disseminates information about best practices. Local workgroups are required to summarize their activities in a quarterly report to the State One-Stop Project Manager, who disseminates this information to the members of the various local and state workgroups.

The Management Team also develops and disseminates a monthly newsletter—"The One-Stop Link"—which provides information on the status of and new developments in the local One-Stop systems. Summaries of the accomplishments of the One-Stop Work Teams are provided in the newsletter. The state also facilitates periodic "Partners Helping Partners" conferences that promote communication and exchange of best practices among the staff of local One-Stop systems. Through highlighted presentations by state Work Team members, these conferences also promote communication between state and local staff.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

A number of funding issues are influencing the progress and pace of Ohio's transition to a statewide One-Stop system. Ohio initially requested just over $9 million in DOL One-Stop implementation grant funds for each of three years, for a total federal investment of $26.4 million. These funds, in combination with its own planned investment of $28 million—largely to develop information systems and renovate existing Customer Service Centers—were expected to enable Ohio to complete its One-Stop system development within the three-year implementation grant period. The original plan called for the establishment of thirty local One-Stop systems, which would have covered the state by generally paralleling the existing SDA configuration. Seven pilot sites were planned for the first year, then eleven or twelve sites were to be established in each of the final two years of the implementation grant.

However, with a first-year DOL grant award of only $6.7 million and an initial lack of information about the amount of federal funding that would be available for the second and third years of the implementation grant, Ohio was forced to revamp its plan and schedule for the development of local One-Stop systems. Among the changes made were a reduction or delay in some of the planned state and local support mechanisms, a reduction in the planned state project staff from four to three positions, and an uncertainty about how many second and third year sites would be approved for implementation funding.

Ohio has made it clear that funding reductions have not altered its basic approach to One-Stop planning. The state has maintained its planned allocation level of $440,000 for each of the seven first-year pilot sites, for a total of $2.4 million. The revised first-year budget allocates grant funds to the following activities:

- *Local Site Funding.* Seven sites have been funded at an average level of $440,000 per site for the first year. Implementation grant funds must be used as "seed" money at the local level. Funded activities may include technical assistance and capacity building efforts. Although funding may be carried forward into the second year for one-time purchases, funding for staff cannot be carried forward.
- *Labor Market Information.* Originally, Ohio had planned to spend about $2 million for upgrading labor market information during the 3-year funding period. Under the revised budget, this was reduced to just under $400,000 for the first year and approximately $240,000 for the second year. Second year projects will include developing labor market information that can be accessed via the Internet and supporting the Professional Development Institute, which will teach local One-Stop staff how to use labor market information. Because of the DOL funding reductions, some planned activities will be dropped, delayed, or funded from other resources.
- *Ohio Job Net Equipment for One-Stop Sites.* Approximately $1.2 million of the DOL grant funds will be used to purchase Job Net workstations, train OBES field staff in the use of Job Net equipment, and develop Job Net kiosks.
- *Other State Systems.* During the first implementation year, planned expenditures for Ohio Job Net imaging systems were shifted to Veterans funds. This included data technician staff, a Network Administrator and the power supply. Some of these activities are expected to be funded from the second year of the Implementation Grant.
- *Integrated Customer Information System.* Using approximately $800,000 in first year implementation grant funds, Ohio will undertake a major project to develop a "record of service" system. Under this system, three separate management information systems (for UI, JTPA and the Job Net) will be developed on a front-end database system that

has software that allows staff to enter, access, and update client data when additional services are provided. Development of this system will reduce duplicate data entry and facilitate information sharing across programs.

- *Other Technology-Based Support.* First year funds totaling approximately $350,000 will be used for two projects: (1) to fund staff support for the expansion of the state communications network, including network management functions; and (2) to support measurement, evaluation, and research activities (e.g., the development of methods to measure customer satisfaction).

Implementation grant funding for Ohio's second year totaled $4.1 million, about half of what was requested. Of that amount, about $2.68 million was planned to fund seven new local One-Stop systems, to be selected on the basis of competitive proposals. Local sites will also receive some additional funds for information systems equipment and capacity building and technical assistance activities. Ohio will wait until the third-year funding level is announced to decide how many additional sites will be established with DOL grant funds for the third and final year.

To make up for some of the funding shortfalls, Ohio has leveraged supplementary funding from other programs. Some examples of contributions from other funding streams include the following: 1) Job Net workstations for staff were purchased using $222,000 of Worker Profiling funds; 2) Job Net kiosk purchases were supplemented with current JTPA EDWAA Governor's Reserve funds; 3) $1.4 million from the ES Automation grant was used for Job Net kiosk equipment; and 4) funding for the Job Net imaging system was supplemented with funds from the Veterans Program. Moreover, the GHRIC One-Stop Standing Committee is considering a range of strategies to secure additional funding to support One-Stop system development, including the pursuit of general revenue funds and the utilization of funds contributed by partner programs. Another strategy being considered is to request that the five major agency partners each contribute one staff person to augment the Project Management team.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

Developing a viable capacity building mechanism for Ohio's local One-Stop systems is a daunting challenge because of the range and variety of partners participating in the local systems. Another complicating factor is that staff are located in a number of different physical locations that are linked electronically, rather than sharing the same facility. Each of the first seven sites currently in operation have large and growing numbers of agency partners; one system already has more than 60 partners. Developing the capacities for all partners and staff within each participating organization to perform at their optimum level is a task that will span a number of years. Each year, Ohio plans to focus its state-level capacity building efforts on the localities that receive implementation awards that year.

The Human Resources Work Team assigned to address staff development needs associated with One-Stop implementation initially outlined several overarching capacity-building goals:

- *Staff Utilization*. To develop models for how to deploy existing staff to accomplish the work of the One-Stops;
- *Capacity Building*. To explore existing staff expertise and what new skills staff need to accomplish the new tasks that they will need to do in the One-Stop setting;
- *Resources*. To utilize available capacity-building resources for the first year;
- *Labor Issues*. To determine how staff job descriptions and pay scales should change as One-Stop staff modify their roles and responsibilities.

However, capacity building, as one state respondent expressed it, "is like nailing gelatin to the wall." The Human Resources Work Team continues to confront a number of issues as it attempts to develop a framework for capacity building for the first year and beyond. As in other areas of One-Stop system development, the challenge for the state is to provide a general approach to capacity building, while at the same time leaving enough flexibility to accommodate variations in local capacity building activities across local sites.

Some first-year capacity building and training activities have been provided to state-level One-Stop entities. For example, members of the GHRIC One-Stop Committee and the cross-program monitoring teams have received training on the requirements of the One-Stop system.

Training for staff in the local sites that received first-year implementation funding has been hampered by a lack of capacity building funds in the first year project budget. Furthermore, after analyzing the training needed to enable One-Stop staff to work effectively as members of inter-agency teams, the State Human Resources Work Team determined that they needed to design a long-term capacity building and technical assistance approach. Thus, during the first year of the implementation grant, staff used already existing training resources to support the first-year pilot sites and focused on developing a long-term training and capacity building approach that can be implemented over an extended period to support the One-Stop operations.

To respond to the immediate needs of the local pilot sites, the Human Resources Work Team undertook to provide orientation and discussion sessions for members of local governance boards. Using the model developed in Barry Johnson's book, *Polarity Management: Identifying and Managing Unsolvable Problems,* the Work Team has attempted to work with governance groups to identify issues, barriers, and concerns at the local level as well as those that concern the relationship between the local and state level (e.g., the roles of each partner, common terms, goals for a transformed employment and training system). The Work Team facilitator indicated that training provided to members of local governing boards has assisted board members in better understanding the One-Stop concept. Training has also enabled local board members to support local agency partners in the development of their own One-Stop designs within the guidelines set by the state. Board members have also been provided with materials developed by the State of Ohio Office of Quality for the purpose of improving group interaction, communication skills, and the ability to work toward a common goal. Training topics have included Problem-Solving, Communications Skills, Reaching Consensus, and Strategic Planning.

To identify the additional capacity-building needs of local One-Stop system partners, focus groups comprised of local One-Stop stakeholders convened to discuss what types of training are needed at the local level and to identify potential training vendors. In response to identified problems, members of the State Project Management Team have disseminated information on best practices, provided individualized technical assistance to local areas on a site-by-site basis, and promoted information sharing among peers by sponsoring "Partners Helping Partners" conferences (described above under Communication and Coordination).

In addition, local One-Stop staff have received training and technical assistance from a variety of state entities. Front-line staff have received training to enable them to function as "customer service representatives." Cross-program training has made it possible for partners to provide customers with better information about and referral to their sister partners within their local One-Stop system. Team- and quality-based training, such as Q-Step and Simply Better are also considered important training tools for One-Stop partners at both the state and local levels.

To develop the long-term training plan, the Work Team is in the process of identifying more specifically what training needs to take place, what should be the training responsibilities of the local sites and how training should be delivered (i.e., by the state, by local vendors or state-supported private vendors). One important source of training and technical assistance that has been identified and is already in operation is a Professional Development Institute that is operated by OBES' Labor Market Information Division. The Institute will train One-Stop staff on how to use labor market information, based on case study examples.

Improvements in Labor Market Information and Related Technology-Based Products

The Labor Market Information Division of the OBES is the principal agency responsible for the production, analysis, and dissemination of labor market information for Ohio. The LMI division is supported by the Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (OICC), comprised of some of the same partners involved in the Ohio One-Stop Workgroup. OICC has been central to the integration of the labor market and career information system and was instrumental in the development in 1987 of an automated labor market information system.

The two major products that support the delivery of automated labor market information to Ohio job seekers and employers are the Ohio Career Information System and the Ohio Labor Market Information (LMI) System. A recently added product is the Economic Development and Employment Planning Information System. Due to high utilization of these products by a range of user groups, OBES and its LMI Division are strongly committed to the continued development of an automated delivery system for labor market information. However, these systems have been operating on aging technology platforms that make it difficult to offer user-friendly access to employer and job seeker customers. System improvements currently underway include the upgrading of these systems to take advantage of new information-sharing and information-management technologies. Planned changes will increase the ability of the automated system to provide a user-friendly interface for direct use by customers as well as support "system-wide integration" by making the automated systems available to staff and customers in a large number of local service sites. However, while Ohio has a strong commitment to upgrading its automated information systems, current fiscal resources limit how quickly it can transition to the new technology environment.

Although Ohio currently lists all its job openings on America's Job Bank, there is still work to be done, LMI leadership indicates, to provide better access for employers interested in posting job openings. Ohio has embarked on a number of substantial enhancements to its present Job Net system to support the implementation of the One-Stop concept. Projects currently underway have projected completion dates ranging from six months to three years; projects are in varying stages of development, pilot testing, or implementation.

Selected projects funded with the One-Stop Implementation Grant include: (1) the development of improved technology platforms (e.g., local area networks and Internet access) to support the delivery of automated career and labor market information to One-Stop customers via Ohio's Job Net Information System[5]; (2) the development of a "micro-occupational information system" to provide integrated information to employers, individuals, and service providers on current and projected labor market demands and related training resources by occupation; (3) the development of an electronic bulletin board to share state labor market data banks and local community service directories with dial-up users; (4) an analysis of the specific skills demanded and supplied in different labor markets to improve the labor exchange process; and (5) the development of an electronic customer satisfaction survey for Job Net users to support the measurement of system outcomes.

Other planned enhancements to the technology-based products available to One-Stop customers include: (1) the development of an imaging component for storage and management of job seeker work histories, (2) utilizing America's Talent Bank for storage of resumes (which will provide immediate referrals of qualified job candidates by enabling employers and applicants to exchange information directly), and (3) a resume preparation system available at the one-stop site. Additional technology-based products and services planned for One-Stop systems include the use of touch screen kiosks to obtain customer satisfaction information, incorporating self-assessment tools into automated systems, and adding an on-line community services directory. Finally, the Ohio Occupational Information Coordinating Committee will develop two self-help publications designed to provide One-Stop customers with comprehensive labor market information. These products will be disseminated as hard copy and in electronic form on the Job Net.

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[5] Since August 1996, Ohio Job Net has been available on the Internet. All OBES Customer Service Centers and other ES service sites already have the capacity to access the Internet. One of the second-year Implementation Grant projects is to make Internet access available from all Ohio One-Stop Centers.

Management Information Systems

Due to the complexity of integrating information systems, Ohio will provide a statewide system for use at the local level. This strategy will also reduce development costs and will promote statewide consistency of core services and performance measurements. At the same time, it will allow the use of both "off-the-shelf" and locally-developed software.

Ohio has developed a One-Stop information strategy that builds on the current overall information system approach. The state's newest system, *Ohio Job Net,* will support the critical One-Stop direct service function of job development and job placement. It is also the platform on which a new integrated management information system will be built to support the delivery of integrated One-Stop services. The One-Stop system will use an *integrated customer information* approach to take advantage of the substantial investments already made in automated MIS systems for specific employment and training programs. The One-Stop system building challenge will be to provide One-Stop staff and customers seamless access to the information and functions they need from these existing automated systems.

Information access and sharing among existing systems will be facilitated by the state's adoption of open system standards for the statewide communications network. These standards require that all new computer systems and upgrades follow the Government Open Systems Interconnection Profile. The barrier of confidentiality in sharing information among service providers has already been eliminated for OBES programs (e.g., ES, UI, JTPA, and Veterans Employment Services). Local confidentiality agreements will be executed among the partners in each local One-Stop, system, permitting staff to access all necessary data from any of the databases and systems maintained by the partner agencies overseen by OBES. Additional agreements will be required in local sites where Human Services Department programs will be included; mechanisms to deal with these issues are currently in the discussion stage at the local and state levels.

Ohio's overall information system plan for One-Stops, which covers the delivery of automated information services to One-Stop customers as well as the management of information for administrative purposes, consists of three major components:

- *Ohio Job Net.* As described previously, this improved state-of-the art labor exchange system will be expanded to provide direct self-service access to all One-Stop individual and employer customers. In addition, it will be used by all One-Stop staff to support the integrated system-wide delivery of job referral and job placement services.
- *Integrated Customer Information.* Program integration and performance measurement will be supported by providing seamless access to and tracking of customer information currently found in three existing information systems: Ohio Job Net, the JTPA system, and the UI Benefits system. Integration will also be supported by an automated referral system linking Ohio Job Net and JTPA and featuring an "expert front-end" that simplifies the use of the UI system for initial claims taking by cross-trained staff from other programs.
- *Labor Market Information.* Ohio's existing automated LMI system will be enhanced and access expanded for both staff and customer use.

During the first year of the One-Stop Implementation Grant, electronic linkages among partner agencies were not yet in place. Although OBES offices could share information over the Ohio Job net system, other partners in local One-Stop systems could not yet exchange information.

Marketing

The Marketing Communications Work Team was charged with the task of exploring such issues as defining the state's role in providing marketing assistance to local One-Stop systems and determining what marketing efforts should be undertaken at the state level. The Marketing Work Team defined its role as providing unifying marketing themes and marketing resources for the local systems to use. In keeping with this role, the Work Team has developed a state One-Stop logo and a brochure. The state logo is used on the Job Net kiosks, along with a local logo where one has been developed.

The Work Team plans to provide the local One-Stops with tools to develop their own marketing strategies and to work with the local marketing workgroups when they request assistance. Under consideration is the development of an informational video that could be modified and used at the local level as well. A state-wide issue is the question of how much to market the One-Stop systems to employers before the One-

Stop systems are fully formed. Another factor affecting One-Stop marketing strategy with respect to employer customers is the generally low unemployment rate, which makes it difficult for the One-Stop system to meet employer demands for qualified job applicants.

An analysis of the current One-Stop context has led to preliminary state marketing decisions to stress general One-Stop services rather than specific programs, and to provide information on the transition to the new One-Stop system and its positive impact on improving customer access to services. To support local marketing efforts, the Marketing Work Team has developed some general themes which it suggests should be incorporated in local market efforts directed to customers and service providers. In addition it has developed a list of suggested activities to be executed at the state and local level in the areas of public relations and advertising.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Ohio's initial three-year implementation plan included several key initiatives: it anticipated the establishment of 30 One-Stops, roughly one within each of the 30 SDAs. However, since DOL funding was less than anticipated, Ohio revised its implementation plan. Seven sites received implementation funding the first year, to be used as pilot sites to test various innovations. Seven additional sites are scheduled to receive implementation funding the second year. The number of additional sites to receive implementation grant support during the third year will depend upon the level of DOL funding received. As a part of its "systems" planning, however, OBES will continue with its development of Customer Service Centers which integrate ES and UI services and expand partner co-location and service integration. The existence of 19 Customer Service Centers in a number of locations throughout the state reduces the pressure on the state to move more quickly in One-Stop system development than it feels comfortable in doing.

Labor market information and management information systems enhancements, some of which require testing and implementation over a longer period of time, have been spread out over the three-year period. The Job Net information system development, which includes design work and programming, is scheduled for completion by the end of 1997. Providing wider access to Job Net and training staff from multiple agencies to use the Job Net system will, of course, extend into the third year, since some of the One-Stops sites will not be established until then. Other system development efforts, such as the resume preparation system, are scheduled to be completed during the first year.

ASSESSMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Several key themes have so far influenced the shape of Ohio's One-Stop efforts. First, Ohio is developing a *system* of electronically-linked service sites that build on existing resources, rather than implementing new stand-alone One-Stop career centers. The economic and cultural diversity of the state, reduced funding at the state and DOL level, and the need to cover all areas in the state with adequate employment, training, and human service-based systems has influenced Ohio to develop strategies that link existing service components into an integrated One-Stop system that will enable Ohio's workforce and businesses to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Second, Ohio's "non-cookie cutter" approach has given the local systems great latitude in shaping their service delivery options to serve local needs. The decision-making and governance process by which the system is being designed is also uniquely Ohio's. Work Teams at the state level and their counterparts at the local level are composed of mandated and encouraged agency partners as well as business, labor, and other community stakeholders. The Work Teams' preliminary research, guiding principles, and recommended courses of action are reviewed and approved by the respective governing entities at the local and state level. While this method has reduced "turfism" and prevented control of the One-Stop system by any single agency at the state or local level, the resulting decision-making process can sometimes be lengthy, resulting in valuable time lost. Moreover, while it is important that key agency and department representatives at high levels are involved in the process, some have complained that they and their key staff members are spending inordinate amounts of time on One-Stop issues, when they should be devoting more time to their primary duties.

Ohio's history of agency and stakeholder collaboration at the local level, however, has helped local partners move to a collaborative approach that involves a wide range of employment, training, and human service partners. The range of education and training agencies involved in key planning committees and groups such as Common Good Teams, Vocational Education Full Service Centers, and the School-to-Work initiative ensure wide-spread agency participation in the One-Stop planning process. Ohio, however, as is the case with many other states, will need to find a way to integrate more fully those agencies responsible for welfare-to-work and school-to-work initiatives. These agencies have historically been separate from the employment and training delivery system but are essential partners in developing community strategies to ensure that individuals receive the supports they need to move into the labor market.

Finally, the issue of inadequate funding will continue to influence the pace of Ohio's transition to the One-Stop system. While Ohio has attempted to be creative in its use of DOL funding streams, it is also considering other methods to get the job done. Admitting that Ohio may need a fourth implementation year to achieve statewide implementation of the One-Stop system may ultimately be preferable to rushing to achieve nominal statewide implementation without adequately preparing the infrastructure and support systems needed to support local One-Stop operations.

APPENDIX R

WOOD COUNTY EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTER
BOWLING GREEN, OHIO
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During August, 1996

WOOD COUNTY EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTER
BOWLING GREEN, OHIO
One-Stop Profile

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WOOD COUNTY EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTER
BOWLING GREEN, OHIO

One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Ohio has allowed local areas to define their own One-Stop system boundaries and develop their own One-Stop governance structures. In northwestern Ohio, workforce development and human service agencies in Wood and Lucas Counties have formed a two-county "One-Stop System." These two counties also constitute a two-county JTPA service delivery area. The two counties combined have a labor force of just over 300,000. Lucas County includes Toledo, a large ethnically diverse urban center, and its more affluent suburban environs. Wood County, with an area of about 620 square miles, is predominantly rural. Most Wood County residents live in small villages and towns surrounded by wheat and soybean fields. Bowling Green, the county seat, is also the largest town in Wood County with a population of just over 28,000 people.

At the time of the site visit, two service sites within the local One-Stop system had been designated by the state as One-Stop career centers and had received implementation grant funds to support their transformation efforts. These included the Lucas County One-Stop Employment Resource Center—housed in the Toledo Employment Service Office—and the Wood County Employment Resource Center—housed in the Wood County Justice Center, five miles from Bowling Green. Since the time of the site visit, an Ohio Bureau of Employment Services' Customer Service Center[1] located near the Toledo airport—about fifteen miles from the center of Toledo—has also received official designation from the state as a One-Stop career center. Additional service sites operated by the various employment, training, and human service agencies and organizations participating in the local One-Stop initiative are also considered part of the local One-Stop system. The Wood County Employment Resource Center is the primary focus of this profile.

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[1] Customer Service Centers are sites sponsored by the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) for the integration of ES and UI staffing and services. Additional workforce development agencies are often invited to co-locate at Customer Service Centers. Local areas are required by the state to involve OBES Customer Service Centers in local One-Stop systems. Individual Customer Service Centers may also request official designation as One-Stop centers, if they meet the qualifications.

Several key factors have influenced the development of the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop system. These include: (1) a shift in the local economic base from basic manufacturing to the service and information sectors; (2) the fact that older experienced workers have experienced a disproportionate share of the impacts of these economic dislocations; and (3) difficulties making services accessible to residents of the two-county area, as a result of limited public transportation. In combination, these factors have caused One-Stop agency partners in Lucas and Wood counties to attempt to make significant improvements in how services are provided to unemployed and welfare-dependent residents within the emerging One-Stop Center System.

- *A shift in the local economic base from basic manufacturing to the service and information sectors.* Once the hub of auto and auto supply manufacturing industries, some of the larger manufacturing employers in Toledo and the surrounding area are being replaced by small firms that employ 50 to 100 persons. Although overall unemployment rates are currently low, the two counties have also been affected by layoffs and closures at aerospace and defense manufacturing facilities. Increased automation, intended to increase competitiveness at the firm level, has also contributed to corporate downsizing and layoffs. Although manufacturing concerns still employ about 11,000 workers locally, the major growth industries are the production of services as well as local and state government. Wood County's largest employer is Bowling Green State University. To adjust to these structural shifts, residents need good information about labor market trends, occupational choices, and education, training, and employment opportunities. Despite the sizable pool of dislocated workers, employers say they need assistance finding qualified job applicants in the tight labor market.
- *Older experienced workers have experienced a disproportionate impact of these economic dislocations.* Individuals dislocated as a result of the decline of the manufacturing sector are not as likely to be hired into emerging sectors due to age discrimination, limited education, and other factors. They tend to be unemployed longer than those dislocated from other industries; most are in their mid-forties, they often lack a high school education and the skills which could qualify them for employment in the information and service industries. The employment practices of firms in new and emerging firms also leads to limited opportunities for the reemployment of dislocated workers. Firms are working existing employees longer hours and attempting to increase productivity and stabilize their existing workforces rather than hiring

new workers. As a result of these trends, a wide variety of local residents, from skilled to unskilled workers, need assistance obtaining financial, social, and employment services.

- *Difficulties making services accessible to residents of the two-county area.* The centralized physical location of employment, training and social services providers has made it difficult for individuals to access to the services that could make them employable. An aging and inadequate transportation system throughout the two-county area contributes to the problem of accessing services. In Wood County, for example, which has no public transportation system, almost 20% of the population must use transportation alternatives to a private car. In the absence of mass transit, local One-Stop partners plan to make services more accessible to local residents by maintaining multiple service sites dispersed throughout the service area—connected through electronic linkages and a "no wrong door" policy.

Lucas and Wood County's One-Stop vision was strongly influenced by its assessment of the mismatch between labor market needs and residents' skills as well as by the direct feedback from customers on service gaps in an SDA-wide survey conducted in 1994. The local vision is very similar to the state's: the One-Stop system must be customer-driven, effectively address the needs of the future workforce and the universal customer (defined as new labor market entrants, incumbent, and transitional workers), and serve the employment and training needs of the counties' employers. Local One-Stop planners say that services must be comprehensive, integrated, holistic, timely, simple and of high quality, and offered by staff who are well-trained, professional, courteous and responsive. The director of the Toledo Area PIC also indicated that the vision would evolve as the system expanded and its goals were further clarified. This respondent also emphasized that expanded technological linkages will allow *all* agencies and organizations to have equal access to the One-Stop system, whether or not they are participating partners.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Local Level Organization and Governance. Early on, the state of Ohio emphasized that potential applicants for local One-Stop System implementation grants should develop their local designs based on the requirements of the local labor market and the perceived needs of their varied local partners. State policymakers emphasized that "flexibility" and "local design" were keys to developing a workable local system. Although Ohio's long-term goal is to establish thirty local One-Stop systems, each with at least one qualifying One-Stop center, the establishment of system boundaries was also left to the discretion of local grant applicants. Wood and Lucas Counties elected to apply for One-Stop implementation grants as a single One-Stop System, since they are contiguous counties, part of the same JTPA service delivery area (SDA), and each County had already developed functioning relationships with a wide range of agency partners.

The local governance system for the Lucas/Wood County One-Stop system generally mirrors Ohio's state-level One-Stop decision-making structure. A Lucas/Wood County Governance Council oversees system development and has created formal Workgroups to develop designated aspects of the local One-Stop system. Local partners decided to create a new governmental structure rather than use an existing policy board—such as the local Private Industry Council—to ensure that each partner has an equal voice in discussing and making decisions on those issues which affect all partners.

The local Governance Council is comprised of all the participating partners that have a full-time or part-time on-site presence at one of the local One-Stop Employment Resource Centers (ERCs). Additional members include representatives from stakeholder entities such as the County Commissioners, employer and economic development groups, the union representing some state employees, and managers of the local Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) offices. Local system partners are expected to participate fully in the implementation and continuing improvement of the operations, administration, monitoring, and evaluation of the One-Stop centers. They are also expected to help attain the benchmarks and goals which the state establishes for local One-Stop systems.

The Governance Council generally attends to the provision of universal or core One-Stop services to the "Universal Customer." According to Ohio's design, the responsibilities of local governance bodies include (1) ensuring that its One-Stop system is implemented in accordance with the local and state agreements, (2) ensuring that performance standards are achieved for specific outcomes, (3) overseeing the management of each One-Stop center; (4) assisting in the development and approval of local agreements among all partners, and (5) providing local budget oversight. The Governance Council's decisions are made by consensus. Council decisions are usually based upon the recommendations made by Workgroups that develop recommended plans of action on a variety of specific One-Stop implementation issues. The

Governance Council is required to meet bimonthly, disseminate its minutes to all the Workgroups and submit written quarterly reports to the One-Stop Committee of the GHRIC.

The Toledo Area Private Industry Council (PIC) provides key support functions to the local Governance Council. The PIC is the signatory and fiscal agency for the local One-Stop implementation grant. It also provides staffing for the Council, submits reports to the Council's Finance Workgroup and ensures financial accountability for the grant, and is responsible for monitoring One-Stop implementation progress and submitting periodic progress reports on the grant to the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, which is the state agency responsible for administering the local implementation grants.

The Workgroups established by the Council are intended to research and then make recommendations to the Governance Council relative to their stated responsibilities. Each member of the Governance Council must be either a chair or a member of at least one Workgroup. Workgroups currently consist of: Management Information Services, Training and Capacity Building, and Marketing and Finance. Separate Workgroups discuss design and operational issues relevant to the individual Lucas and Wood County ERCs. Part-way through the initial implementation year, several additional Workgroups were disbanded as separate entities and their functions were merged with the functions of other Workgroups or the full Council.

One-Stop Center Managers are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the designated One-Stop Centers and for implementing Workgroup Action Plans approved by the Governance Council. Center Managers are also responsible for implementing training, capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation procedures, as well as providing information on center operations to the Council's Workgroups. The center manager for the Lucas County ERC—called a Facilitator—is a PIC employee. The Wood County ERC is co-managed by senior staff members from the Toledo PIC and the Wood County Department of Human Services.

Half-way through the first year of operations of the local One-Stop system, a half-day retreat was held to give partners an opportunity to discuss their progress and suggest modifications to the local governance system, as well as provide an opportunity to assess the strength of partner agencies' commitment to the One-Stop system. One identified problem was the slowness of the decision-making process. To shorten the time needed to make and implement One-Stop decisions, the partners attending the retreat agreed to eliminate a separate Administrative Workgroup and merge its membership into the full Governance Council. Under the new system, Workgroups can make recommendations to the full Council and implement their Action Plans as soon as they are approved by the Governance Council.

Many respondents identified "consensus building" and "eliminating turfism" as key implementation challenges facing the local One-Stop system. However, most partners indicated that the One-Stop structure for collaboration, despite its slowness, still is preferable to other governance options. The acting director of the PIC indicated that the decision by the local partners to continue the partnerships for a second year—even though sites receiving first year One-Stop implementation grants will not be eligible to receive continuation funding from the state—is proof that the commitment to the One-Stop System " way of doing things" is still very strong.

Participating Local Agencies. Ohio's One-Stop guidelines require that local partners must include the agencies responsible for all DOL-funded programs. In addition, agencies responsible for three out of four additional programs (welfare-to-work, vocational education, adult basic education, and public two-year colleges) must be included in order to compete for a DOL One-Stop grant, or to be designated as a One-Stop center. In the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop system, all core partners are required to out-station staff at the designated One-Stop centers at least part- time. Partners also maintain "home sites" at their own facilities. Mandatory and other partners serving customers at both ERCs have been cross-trained. This allows them to assist customers in accessing One-Stop information services, to understand more about the eligibility requirements for their partner agencies, and to make good referrals.

At the Wood County Employment Resource Center, partners have emphasized the importance of referring customers to the appropriate agency or organization. Part-time co-location is viewed as a tool to ensure that appropriate referrals are made as well as an opportunity to provide direct customer services. Representatives of all the mandatory programs are on-site at least once a week—on Wednesdays for a minimum of four hours; on other weekdays they may be contacted for appointments at their home sites. Representatives of additional non-mandatory program partners also visit the One-Stop site, but less frequently. They may also be reached at their home sites for appointments.

Agencies participating in the Wood County Employment Resources Center are described below, along with a brief summary of their program responsibilities and roles within the One-Stop center.

- *Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES).* OBES is the state's lead agency for the One-Stop initiative. OBES maintains a home site in a central location in Bowling Green. OBES Customer Service Representatives responsible for ES and UI have been cross-trained and are able to assist customers with both programs. On Wednesdays, an OBES Customer Service Representative visits the Wood County ERC where he/she provides on-site registration for Unemployment Insurance, Employment Services, JTPA Title III, and Veterans Employment Services.

- *Green Thumb, the service provider for Senior Community Service Employment Program, Title V, Older Americans Act.* During the first year of One-Stop implementation in Lucas and Wood County, Green Thumb assigned a staff person on-site at the Wood County ERC only on Wednesdays. However, during the second year of One-Stop operations, Green Thumb is planning to pay for a receptionist who will be present at the ERC three days a week. On-site Green Thumb staff provide customers with information about their services and programs, conduct eligibility determinations and make referrals to other services.

  The JOBS Program of the Wood County Department of Human Services (DHS). This county agency operates financial assistance programs and welfare-to-work programs for county residents. The home site for this agency is also in the Wood County Justice Center and many of its clients are referred to the Employment Resource Center to attend a mandatory Job Club offered at the ERC. A JOBS program staff member assigned full-time to the ERC acts as the center co-manager. JOBS staff provide on-site services and referrals to center customers each weekday. On-site services include the review of applications and determination of eligibility for DHS services, including financial assistance and referrals to training, Job Club, a GED class (also available to the general public), and Community Work Experience.

- *Toledo Area PIC.* The PIC is responsible for the delivery of JTPA services. The PIC has assigned a full-time staff member to the Wood County ERC. This individual acts as the other center co-manager. In addition, he provides information about JTPA services, eligibility information, enrollment, and referral to JTPA-funded training. The PIC staff also conducts follow-up and tracks activities provided to One-Stop customers.

- *Penta County Vocational School.* Penta provides an on-site Adult Basic Education/GED class. On-site staff also provide orientation, eligibility determination, and program registration for off-site training offered by the school. At its home site, Penta staff also provide career guidance, counseling, job seeking skills and career development activities.
- *Owens Community College.* Ohio's two year community and technical colleges fall under the jurisdiction of the Ohio Board of Regents. Initially, Owens Community College assigned a staff to provide on-site orientation, eligibility screening, and registration for community college classes. However, midway through the first year of implementation, Owens withdrew its staff representative from on-site participation since not enough One-Stop customers were being referred to community college services.

Non-mandatory partners who participate in the Wood County ERC program are not, on site each week as a general rule; however, they may always be contacted at their home sites. They include the following:

- *Wood County Work Industry.* Located adjacent to the Wood County Justice Center, this agency administers a voluntary work experience program for offenders. Employers may purchase goods and services from the program.
- *Wood County Alcohol, Drug Abuse, Mental Health Services Board.* Located in the Justice Center, this agency provides referral and assistance to individuals who qualify for its services.
- *Wood County Veterans Assistance Center.* Funded through a small local county tax, services provided by this program include information on employment and training programs and some financial assistance.
- *The Rehabilitation Services Commission* administers the vocational rehabilitation services program targeted to individuals with substantial physical or mental disabilities.
- *YW Child Care Connections.* Representatives of this agency assess local child care facilities and assist working parents to find suitable child care. Staff from this program may be contacted at their home site.
- *First Call for Help.* United Way of Greater Toledo provides information on the range of services available to customers throughout the two-county area. They also publish a brochure that lists local various services and programs including legal aid, child care, mental health, employment and training.

A third group of organizations, referred to as "affiliated partners," consist largely of community-based organizations, which do not have an on-site presence, but which may refer clients to the ERC and also receive referrals. These partners are a part of DHS's extensive case management system network. The DHS center co-manager meets regularly with these organizations and keeps them informed of county-wide One-Stop activities.

In summary, the organization of the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop effort is characterized by a consensus form of governance in which all partners have an opportunity to participate in decision making through the Governance Council as well as in the development of the fundamental One-Stop System structure (as it evolves) through participation in the various Workgroups. A wide range of local mandatory and non-mandatory partners have staff located at the Wood County Employment Resource Center using a variety of arrangements, including full-time co-location of some programs and weekly outstationing of staff from other programs at the One-Stop center.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Communication Within the Local System. The governance structure for the local One-Stop system affords many opportunities for communication among local partners. Below is a list of some of the mechanisms that are used to "get the word out" on what is being recommended and accomplished for the system as a whole, as well as for the Wood County center.

- *Workgroup meetings.* The required bi-monthly meetings of each of the Workgroups provide the opportunity for informal information sharing among system partners.
- *Dissemination of Workgroup minutes.* Minutes of each Workgroup's meetings are shared with the members of the Governance Council and each of the other Workgroups. The PIC is responsible for disseminating the proceedings of Workgroup meetings.
- *Governance Council reports.* Workgroup reports and recommendations are presented to the Governance Council. Council actions in the form of meeting minutes and reports are also disseminated by the PIC staff to the various One-Stop partners.
- *Coordination with other agencies.* The DHS co-manager for the Wood County Employment Resources Center has monthly meetings with a number of "affiliated partners" (described in the previous section) as part of its case management system for welfare recipients. This provides another avenue for communication exchange and information sharing on the activities of One-Stop partners in Wood County.

A retreat attended by all local project partners mid-way through the first year provided an additional opportunity for staff from all agencies to discuss progress, determine gaps, assess partner attitudes and needs, and plan for the next year.

State-Local Communication. Ohio uses several mechanisms to keep locals informed about state level One-Stop plans and activities. First, the state invites representatives from its local One-Stop systems to apply for membership on the state-level One-Stop Work Teams. In a few instances, Lucas/Wood County partners have been able to take advantage of this opportunity. For example, the state Human Resources Work Team includes two members from the Lucas and Wood County Capacity Building Workgroup.

Second, to provide an opportunity for local One-Stop systems to share their experiences with other local areas, the state One-Stop Management team has sponsored several "Partners Helping Partners" conferences designed to share information and best practices among the One-Stop implementation sites. The state plans to sponsor more such information sharing conferences as new sites come on line.

Third, as described in the state profile, the state Management Team also publishes a monthly newsletter, "The One-Stop Link." The purpose of the newsletter is to inform state and local level partners and stakeholders on progress of the One-Stop systems as well as to report on state level activities and accomplishments. Although local respondents agreed that they are well-informed about local activities, several commented that they would appreciate having a more consistent and reliable mechanism to keep informed about state One-Stop plans and activities.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

Local planning for improved system coordination and integration began in 1994, when representatives from a number of local agencies met to develop applications for Governor's Reserve Funds for JTPA Special Projects and OBES-sponsored UI Collaboration Grants to establish "one-stop shops" for dislocated workers. The Toledo Area Private Industry Council (PIC) acted as the convener of an interagency team to develop each county's grant applications. To plan for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the delivery of services to dislocated workers, staff in each county assessed the skills and requirements of the local work force in relation to the needs of existing employers as well projected new employment opportunities.

Wood County agencies also built on their experiences developing an inter-agency human resources case management network for individuals receiving assistance from the welfare system. As part of this case management system, a variety of human service-related agencies had begun meeting on a monthly basis to foster mutual referrals and overall coordination efforts. In addition, JOBS and Wood County JTPA were co-located in what is now the Wood County Employment Resource Center. In that partnership, they provided "whatever services were needed" to welfare and JTPA - eligible clients. As a result of these collaboration efforts, these two agencies began to develop closer ties with OBES-funded programs, since it became obvious that job search and employment services were an essential element of the services to promote client well-being and self-sufficiency.

In connection with these planning efforts, each county also initiated a thorough assessment of its workforce development system by surveying residents about their workforce development service needs and their experiences accessing unemployment insurance, employment services, education, training and social services. Survey findings revealed that customers perceived a serious problem of duplication of effort and insufficient coordination among different employment-related service systems. Identified service gaps included an absence of career development services, the need for a coordinated effort to address child care and transportation needs, and a need for timely and useful services for employers and incumbent workers.

In response to its grant applications, Lucas County was awarded a UI Collaboration project by OBES for the establishment of a one-stop shop for dislocated workers, located at the Toledo PIC offices. In mid-1995, soon after one-stop implementation efforts for dislocated workers began in Lucas County, the state announced the availability of local implementation grants in connection with its statewide One-Stop Career Center System initiative. Lucas County's experience developing a one-stop shop for dislocated workers and Wood County's history of strong partnerships among a large number of human service agencies and the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) as part of its welfare-to-work system provided firm starting places from which each county could pursue further system integration. The Private Industry Council convinced the two counties to merge their interests to apply for a first year Ohio "One-Stop System" grant.

The Lucas and Wood County application was approved for funding as part of the state's first-year One-Stop implementation phase. The funding period established for the local implementation grant was November 1995 through October 1996. Ultimately a two-month extension was granted to permit expenditure of the grant funds through December 1996. The specific designs for implementing One-Stop services were similar in both counties. Each county planned to develop a physical facility—referred to in each county as an Employment Resource Center—that would have a small full-time staff, supplemented by additional staff outstationed on a part-time basis from the home sites of each of the participating agencies. In each county, the participating partners in the local One-Stop system planned to achieve full integration of services by implementing a "no wrong door" policy, integrated management information systems, and automated technology-based services for customers, and cross-training direct service staff to provide information about the services provided by all local partners.

At the Wood County Employment Resource Center, five full-time on-site staff were designated to support ongoing Center operations. These included co-managers from the Wood County Department of Human Services and the Toledo Private Industry Council and a receptionist. In addition, each co-manager supervised a staff member from their agency who provided case management and referral for individuals eligible for their respective programs. Additional partners would provide on-site services at least one day a week. Core services—including information, referral, pre-eligibility screening, assessment/testing, information about job openings, and job search assistance—would be provided on site or through referral to partners at their home sites. In addition to the core services required by the state, the local One-Stop plan called for the provision of tracking and follow-up/case management services to all One-Stop customers. The labor market exchange services would be enhanced by a self-service kiosk connected to Ohio's Job Net automated system, which allows customers to register for UI benefits, review employers' job orders, and obtain basic labor market and information.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

Policymakers at the PIC and One-Stop center level have emphasized the importance of serving the "Universal Customer," a term they use to refer to individuals from three groups: new labor market entrants, incumbent workers, and transitioning workers. To meet the needs of all these customers will require the development over time of a broad range of "workforce development" services to address both employer and individual customer needs.

The workforce development goal for the Lucas and Wood County Employment Resource Centers states that a customer should, "...be able walk into any community agency, One-Stop Site or Family Resource Center and receive referrals to all social service, community, and employment and training services." During the first year of its operation, the local One-Stop system has made significant progress toward that goal. Three sites, including the two Employment Resource Centers funded through Ohio's One-Stop implementation grant and an OBES-sponsored Customer Service Center, have received official state designation as One-Stop centers. The existence of multiple service locations—including not only official One-Stop centers, but also the home sites of participating agencies—will ultimately allow customers to access One-Stop services from a wide variety of geographic locations. This feature of the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop system is important, given the lack of an efficient public transportation system and the existence of a significant number of residents that do not have access to a car.

At the present time, access to the Wood County Employment Resource Center site located five miles from the center of town may be difficult for those who do not have their own means of transportation. A taxi ride from the center of Bowling Green to the ERC costs one dollar. However, when the "no wrong door" vision for the entire system becomes a reality (i.e., when system-wide interconnected computers make intake and referral possible across multiple sites), customers will be able to access services not only through the designated One-Stop centers but also through partner agency home sites, educational institutions and local community based organizations.

The Wood County Employment Resource Center is currently in the process of developing universal services. During the first year of One-Stop operations, customers were offered on-site intake and needs identification, registration for UI benefits and ES services, and information about and referral to a broad range of other employment and training programs, and social and human service agencies. At the present time, intake, referral, tracking, and follow-up are accomplished using paper forms and hard-copy case files. However, planned improvements in automated information systems will make universal access a reality over the next two years. Although the Wood County ERC provided automated labor market and job information to all customers through a single Ohio Job Net kiosk during its first implementation year, planned improvements in computer systems and communication networks will enable the ERCs to offer customers PC-based access to Ohio Job Net services at multiple workstations during the coming year.

To achieve universal access, the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop system will also need to increase the One-Stops' visibility and promote widespread utilization of One-Stop services. Planned marketing efforts to convince both job seekers and employers of the benefits of using the new system are described in a later section.

Customer Choice

The Ohio One-Stop vision suggests that effective customer choice must begin with providing customers the information they need to make informed choices. A necessary second step is helping customers access whatever assistance or information they require through the local One-Stop service network. During the first year of One-Stop operations, partners in Wood County improved the mechanisms used to provide information to Wood County residents about available services. For example, the Wood County United Way agency published an attractive brochure, "First Call For Help," that provides descriptions on how to access a wide range of community programs, including those provided through the Wood County Employment Resource Center.

Because staff at all the One-Stop centers are now cross-trained, they can conduct effective intake interviews and are able to make more and better referrals to employment, training, and social services. Current technology-based products and systems that provide customers with labor market information include the Ohio Job Net kiosks and Ohio's Home Page on the Internet. The Home Page was established by the state during the summer of the first One-Stop implementation year. This resource serves both individual customers and employers who have Internet access from their own computers or through OBES offices. Internet access from the Wood County Employment Resource Center should be implemented during the second year of One-Stop operations.

Customer choice is also augmented by the wide range of service providers participating in the One-Stop system in Wood County, including not only the Department of Human Services, JTPA, and the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (ES and UI), but also such specialized agencies as the Rehabilitation Services Commission, the Veterans Assistance Center, and Substance Abuse Services. The active involvement of specialized agencies makes it possible for the One-Stop center staff to refer individuals to agencies that will offer them core services tailored to their special needs.

Integrated Services

"Customers do not care which agency the staff is from, they just want service." Consistent with this statement made by one of the One-Stop managers, Lucas and Wood County intend to meet the goal of the "delivery of seamless services" using the following strategies:

(1) *Cross-training of reception and intake staff.* Cross-training improves the capabilities of on-site partners to provide improved assessment, referral, and ongoing tracking and case management services to center customers. This was completed during the first year.

(2) *Improvements to Ohio's Job Net.* The development and maintenance of Ohio's Job Net is the responsibility of the state OBES's LMI Division. The One-Stop vision is for this automated system to be available to customers from the home sites of all One-Stop partner agencies. By the end of the second year of One-Stop implementation, it is planned that improvements to and broader dissemination of the Ohio Job Net system will allow One-Stop center staff to register customers and enter job orders into Ohio's Job Net system directly from their personal computers.

Yet to be fully realized are improvements planned for the second and third year of state and local One-Stop implementation that will greatly assist in the integration of services across partners. These enhancements include the implementation of a computerized intake and referral system. Under Ohio's planned intake, referral, and tracking system, information entered into a single registration form—called a "customer record of service"—will be transferable to any local One-Stop partner agency. Through technological linkages among local partners, all agencies will be able to retrieve basic client information from the common intake form, record referrals to additional partners, track clients, and record outcome and service data to be used for measurement of system performance.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

The state One-Stop Program Performance Work Team has taken primary responsibility for measuring the performance of the local One-Stop systems. During the first implementation year, this Work Team developed a draft performance measurement plan, which was approved by the GHRIC. The Work Team has emphasized that the program performance system must measure services to all individual and employer customers for the One-Stop system. During the second implementation year, the state plans to establish the actual performance standards and adjustment processes, if any, and identify the consequences for successful or substandard performance.

In the interim, state cross-program monitoring teams have evaluated each of the local One-Stop systems that received implementation grants against self-determined goals and benchmarks. The state monitoring teams prepared a monitoring report on each local system with recommendations for local system improvements. These reports were shared with the local area and submitted to the state Governance Council. In addition, the Governance Council required the Toledo Area PIC—as the fiscal agent for the grant—to monitor local One-Stop implementation activities. Quarterly reports must also be submitted to the GHRIC. With approval from the Governance Council, the PIC has supplemented its other monitoring activities with the use of a monitor who assesses the quality of One-Stop services by pretending to be a system customer.

Physical Facilities

The Wood County Employment Resource Center is located in the County Justice Center complex, about five miles from the center of Bowling Green. This pleasant complex—which also houses the Wood County Department of Human Services and many of its social service agency partners—consists of a number of one-story brown wooden buildings interspersed with landscaped areas and sidewalks. The entire complex was built in the early 1980's; the building housing the ERC was built by public assistance recipients as part of a work experience/training program. The ERC shares its building with the Jail Industry program, a program that provides work experience for local adult correctional system inmates. The building was recently refurbished to provide sufficient space to accommodate the needs of the different agencies participating in the One-Stop center.[2]

The interior of the building appears friendly, rather than intimidating, and is almost cozy. The reception area is located just inside the front door. To the right of the front door is the Ohio Job Net kiosk, close to the counter where the receptionist greets customers. To the left of the reception area and down the hall are offices used by the center co-managers and their staff and smaller rooms used by the various on-site partners. Farther down the hall and away from the rest of the building are classrooms used for the GED and Job Club classes. The One-Stop Reference Room, also located close to the classrooms, is available for use during normal business hours. Informational materials inside the Reference Room include telephone directories from multiple counties, daily newspapers, a job-posting board, other informational brochures, county and city maps, and a copier. Telephones are also available for use by job applicants. During the second year of One-Stop operations, personal computers will be installed in a room within the ERC for use by One-Stop customers. Information available on the computers will include: career information, enhanced labor market information, and resume writing software.

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[2] For three years prior to the establishment of the ERC, the Wood County Department of Human Services and JTPA had used this building to provide employment related services for DHS- and JTPA-eligible clients with co-located staff. Services provided included GED and job search classes as well as referral to other training and employment and related programs.

Plans are underway to make the ERC easier to locate. Directional signs will be posted at several road junctures as well as within the County Justice Center campus. (The ERC is located on the outer edge of the campus.) A sign on the building will also identify the Center. There is ample parking space.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

Ohio requires that local One-Stop implementation grants be used primarily for one-time start-up costs. Although some carry-over funding is permissible, all expenditures related to staffing must be used during the one-stop grant period.. The Wood and Lucas County One-Stop system received a 12-month implementation grant of $217,000. The grant period officially began in November 1995. The state subsequently approved an extension to the end of December, 1996.

The activities for which the local grant funding was earmarked included:

- Staff costs for a receptionist at the Wood County ERC and the Lucas County One-Stop facilitator;
- Cross-training and capacity building for local partner staff;
- Networking and computer software and related items;
- The purchase of two Ohio Job Net kiosks, one to be installed within the Wood County ERC; and
- One-Stop marketing efforts.

Ohio requires local implementation grantees to match at least 10% of the state grant amount with in-kind contributions and to describe how other existing resources will be used to support the development of the One-Stop system. Local contributions during the first year of One-Stop operations included:

- Office space and furniture for the Wood County ERC provided by the Wood County JOBS program;
- Office space and furniture for the Lucas County ERC provided by the Toledo office of the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services;
- MIS support and resource library materials provided by the Toledo Area Private Industry Council;
- Computers, workstations, and training space paid for with the Lucas County OBES UI Collaboration Grant awarded for the development of One-Stop services for dislocated workers;
- On-site direct service staff time and planning time contributed by the participating local partners. The One-Stop-specific staff positions funded by the participating partners during the first year of One-Stop operations include the One-Stop center co-managers of the Wood County ERC and two staff assistants (contributed by the Toledo Area PIC and the Wood County Department of Human Services).

The value of the local contributions was estimated at just under $500,000. Initially, the Toledo Area PIC had also planned to provide the salary of the Lucas County ERC facilitator for the entire grant year. However, when the agency's JTPA funding was reduced by 40% in 1996, it was forced to withdraw this support six months into the first year, and implementation grant funds were shifted from the training budget to cover this key staff position.

The Lucas and Wood County One-Stop proposal to the state indicated that other revenue sources, such as the marketing of fee-based services to employers, would be considered. Services that were mentioned as possibilities for fee-based services included workshops on workplace-related issues, specialized on-site customized training and other innovations which the employer community might find useful. The local partners did not pursue these options during the first year of One-Stop implementation.

One of the issues discussed by local partners during the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop retreat in August of 1996 was whether the participants were committed to continue the One-Stop concept beyond the year of implementation grant funding, and if so, what funds and other resources could be identified to support second year operations. The PIC leadership pointed to the fact that partners are willing to share in the ongoing costs of maintaining the new system as a clear demonstration of partner commitment to the new system.

Local funding commitments made for the second year of One-Stop operations include in-kind partner contributions of about $400,000 to cover such cost items as on-site partner agency staff, occupancy costs, and the provision of some staff training by outside providers. The Wood County Department of Human Services and JTPA will continue to fund their center co-managers and one staff assistant for each co-manager. Green Thumb will supply a Senior Community Service Program work experience participant to serve as center receptionist three days a week. The JTPA case manager will provide additional reception and intake support during the two days the Green Thumb receptionist is not working. Other expenses, such as telephone, other communications support, and office supplies will be prorated among partners.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

Co-managers provided by the Wood County Department of Human Services and the Toledo Area PIC are responsible for day-to-day management and operations of the Wood County ERC. The co-managers work as a team; both individuals said that they "do what is necessary to keep the Center operating." The DHS co-manager is chair of the Wood County Center Workgroup (which includes all Wood County agency partners). The JTPA co-manager is in charge of the financial aspects of operating the center and coordinating its software and hardware needs.

Shared day-to-day responsibilities of the Center co-managers include overseeing the scheduling and operation of the Center, assisting in resolving conflicts among partners, and carrying out the action plans approved by the Governance Council. In addition to their One-Stop management responsibilities, the center co-managers are also responsible to their respective agency for program-related duties. Staff from each agency assigned to them conduct more detailed eligibility determinations for their respective programs and assist in referring customers to services offered at the center as well as by their respective agencies.

While co-managers are responsible for implementing and overseeing the One-Stop training, capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation procedures, all local agency partners are expected to share responsibility for meeting local One-Stop goals as well as furthering Ohio's state goals. At each of the One-Stops in the local system, OBES ES and UI representatives have been cross-trained, renamed Customer Service Representatives, and have taken on the functions of assisting customers with both ES and UI services. As described previously, all mandatory agency partners provide on-site service staff at least one-half day each week and offer off-site staffing assistance to Center customers as needed, through referrals to the partner agencies' "home sites." Non-mandatory agency partners also assign staff to visit the Center on a periodic basis, but the frequency of visits may be less than once weekly.

The center receptionist is trained to provide customers with information about the Center, assist customers in operating the Ohio Job Net kiosk, register customers, conduct an initial identification of customers' requirements, and schedule appointments with appropriate partners.

Capacity Building

The state-level Human Resources Work Team is working on developing a long-term capacity-building plan to support staff in the operation of local One-Stop centers. Although developing long-term capacity-building plans, the Work Team also wanted to support staff training efforts undertaken by the local One-Stop systems that received first-year implementation grants. Thus, as a starting point, the state-level Human Resources Work Team plan to conduct workshops to assist local One-Stop governing boards to function more effectively.

At the local level, One-Stop partners found that the resources available for capacity building were not adequate to cover the training needs of One-Stop staff and staff at partner agencies.[3] Early on, the local Capacity Building Workgroup conducted a needs assessment which indicated that partners perceived that training would be needed in four broad areas. In order of priority, these were 1) computer/software topics; 2) operations (intake, case management, partner cross-training to enhance collaboration); 3) human relations; and 4) a partner orientation to other available community resources.

Capacity-building strategies completed the first year included the following:

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[3] A more substantial level of grant funding had initially been planned for staff training needs. However, a shortfall in the local PIC budget forced the local partners to transfer these funds to cover the salary of the Lucas County ERC manager.

- *Partner cross-training,* in which each partner provided an oral presentation and written information describing its agency or organization, the services available, and eligibility criteria for each program described. This training was well received by all partners.
- *Cross training for ES and UI staff,* which prepared these staff for their positions as Customer Service Representatives, capable of conducting intake, identifying customer needs and referring customers to appropriate agencies and other partners.

Plans for further capacity building during the second year of One-Stop operations include improving the foundation for high quality customer service by providing training to receptionists on telephone techniques, how to make referrals, and other topics. Computer training is also planned for year two, after the new computer systems and software have been installed.

Capacity building, as interpreted at the local level, also included strategies to building community support for and understanding of the new One-Stop system. Activities related to these strategies are described in this profile under Marketing.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Ohio has indicated that each One-Stop system is expected to develop its own management information system. To support local system development efforts, the state will (1) create a new "expert front end" to simplify the taking of UI initial claims by cross-trained staff from other agencies; (2) support the development of an integrated customer information system to access and track customer information currently found in three different information systems (ES, UI, and JTPA); (3) develop support and measurement systems for the One-Stop initiative, including an evaluation and research capability; and (4) manage the information network and systems.

The Lucas and Wood County One-Stop MIS Workgroup was formed to:

- serve as an advisory group for the integration of computer software to access and share information on referral, registration, and program scheduling;
- provide or obtain high quality training in computer software applications for appropriate staff;
- ensure appropriate application, usage and maintenance of all computers within the system in order to respond to the present and future needs of the Universal Customer; and
- ensure proper confidentiality of computer records.

Early on, the Workgroup identified three predominant concerns: (1) how to address partner concerns related to confidentiality and security of customer information; (2) how to gain consensus among partners for the implementation of a universal One-Stop customer data sheet; and (3) how to create local networks to connect the three One-Stop centers and the Toledo Area PIC. A broader local concern was how to ensure that decisions made about the design of a local system would ultimately be compatible with the planned statewide "integrated state information system."

The Workgroup's initial efforts focused on how to interconnect the One-Stop sites and agency partners for the purpose of cross-agency data sharing, including identifying existing PCs that could be used in networking, networking systems already in place, and the availability of assistance or funding from the state. To assess partners' views on information-sharing needs as well as confidentiality concerns, the Workgroup surveyed all local partners. The survey results indicated an overriding concern on the part of all partners about maintaining confidentiality regarding client information The Workgroup concluded that it would not be possible to implement an integrated local MIS system until a universal confidentiality agreement was negotiated among the local One-Stop partners.

Limited funding for the local MIS system was also viewed as a barrier to its early development. Just over $100,000 in implementation grant funds was available to support the development of an integrated information system in Lucas and Wood Counties. (This total includes funds from the state share of the DOL Implementation Grant as well as funds from the local grant.) In addition, ten PCs were purchased with UI Collaboration Grant funds. It is anticipated that local partners will provide funds and in-kind contributions to enhance the local communications network. Respondents from the Toledo Area PIC suggested that the wider community should also provide resources to access and sustain this system.

In the absence of consensus on what data should be included in a comprehensive local universal intake form, first year activities included the development and implementation of several "paper" forms. These include a Common Intake Form, a Customer Service Form, a Referral Form, and a Follow-Up Form. These forms were developed for use by the One-Stop receptionist and the system partners to gather basic data on clients and to track them through the system. A "Glossary of Terms" defines the terms, services and systems used in the intake and referral process.

Although operational, there appear to be some gaps in the inter-agency client tracking system as it is currently functioning. For example, as mentioned during the participant focus group, one UI beneficiary who arranged—through a referral by the One-Stop system—to participate in a small business development program at the local vocational school was later notified by UI that her benefits were being terminated "due to claims inactivity." This occurred even though she had been told by the ES/UI representative at the Wood County Employment Resource Center that she would be appraised of available positions and notified for job interviews as appropriate.

Goals for the second year of One-Stop operations include purchasing additional PCs and enabling all local partners to link into the existing system to access and input client data. Both the Lucas and Wood County ERCs will pilot the state's common data base—referred to as the "rolling common intake" and "record of service"—which will require job seekers to input basic demographic data only once at a One-Stop or a partner agency and to share information about subsequent service utilization and outcomes. Computer training for all partners and receptionists is scheduled for early in the second year, as a cooperative effort sponsored by the local MIS and Training and Capacity Building Workgroups.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

At the state-level, the Labor Market Information Division of the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services (OBES) is working to enhance the automated information available through the Ohio Job Net and make this information available to staff and customers in a large number of local service sites. During the first year of One-Stop operations, the Wood County Employment Resource Center offered on-site customers access to Ohio Job Net services through a stand-alone kiosk with a touch-screen interface for user-friendly access. Available through Ohio Job Net are the following automated services: Job Service registration, inquiring or updating the Job Service application, requesting a personal job match, conducting a general job search, and accessing career and labor market information. Employers, educational institutions, and other customers may now access statewide labor market information through the Internet on Ohio's Home Page. In addition, employers with Internet access will soon be able to enter job orders directly on the Ohio Job Net. Ohio's Career Information System (OCIS) is also available on the Internet, but access is limited to subscribers who pay an OCIS fee to access this information.

During the second year of One-Stop operations in Wood and Lucas Counties, the installation of new computer equipment in the Employment Resource Centers networked to a local server will allow the partners at the three One-Stop centers to (1) enter job orders on Ohio Job Net; (2) register customers on the Ohio Job Net and (3) register customers for agency services using the common intake process and database described above. Customers will also be able to access Ohio Job Net's automated career and labor market information on a self-serve basis by using networked computer workstations in the Employment Resource Centers. Plans also include linking other agencies and organizations through a dial in process which would also allow them to access services and make client referrals.

Marketing

Concerns identified by the local Marketing Workgroup during the first year included (1) how to increase the community awareness of the One-Stop system and advertise the existence and location of the One-Stop centers within the local system; (2) how to attract employers to the new system; and (3) how to tailor marketing strategies to the different needs of the individual One-Stop centers.

Building community awareness of and support for the local One-Stop system is viewed as a capacity-building strategy within the local One-Stop system and has been coordinated with work of the local Capacity Building Work Group. To orient the community to the One-Stop System, local partners organized and conducted two "Community Forums" early in the first One-Stop implementation year, one in Lucas County and one in Wood County. Both Community Forums involved residents, employers, and public officials. Both were designed to orient the community at large to the One-Stop system and to assist residents and employers in understanding what the system is and how it will meet customer needs for employment, training, and labor market information. Although center managers and partners at both One-Stop centers were somewhat disappointed by a low employer turnout, the public media did attend the events, resulting in good newspaper coverage.

Additional marketing strategies to increase customer awareness of and support for One-Stop services can be described as a series of incremental steps to provide the general public with a sense of what is being attempted, as well as efforts to invite community input to be used in shaping the new system to be more responsive to customer needs. Marketing products/activities carried out during the first year of One-Stop operations included the development and distribution of brochures describing each local Employment Resource Center, the distribution of rolodex cards with the center's address and phone number, improved center identification, greater visibility in the local telephone book, signs and posters to clearly identify the center location, and—for the Wood County Employment Resource Center—the installation of road signs directing drivers to the Center. Local One-Stop partner and affiliated agencies also helped publicize the existence of the ERCs. An excellent informational brochure called "Help for Hard Times" published by the Wood County United Way includes the Wood County ERC as one of a number of community services described in a series of "pull-out" page.

Within the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop system, the Marketing Workgroup identified differing marketing requirements for each of the One-Stops. At the time of the evaluation site visit, the Lucas County ERC, located in the center of Toledo, was working with over a hundred customers per week, but the Wood County ERC was scheduling far fewer customers, perhaps only an average of a dozen or so customers per week. This indicated to the Workgroup that a "one size fits all" marketing strategy might not work. Although both centers needed to increase participation by local employers, the Wood County ERC also needed to attract more job seeker customers to the Center.

Local marketing plans for the second year of One-Stop operations include: the completion and use of two seven-minute videos describing the services available through the One-Stop system (one for employers and one for job-seeker customers) and focusing their efforts to gain employer interest and support, particularly in Wood County. Planned marketing activities targeted to employers in Wood County include: (1) "Business After Hours" open houses at the Center, (2) the conduct of a *Wood County Town Hall meeting* on the One-Stop system, to be co-sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, and (3) employer lunches profiling individuals who have used the ERC and employers that have used the new system and support it. The objective of these marketing efforts will be to convince employers to make the One-Stop system the access point for job orders as well as to increase their participation in the Employment Resource Centers in other ways. Achieving full-scale employer participation has taken on new importance in response to welfare reform initiatives introduced at the state and federal levels.

At the state level, one of the first year goals of the Marketing Work Team is to support local areas in marketing One-Stop services to employer and job seeker customers. During the first year, state developed a One-Stop logo and brochure to support local marketing efforts, primarily at the state level. However it has been somewhat difficult to coordinate state and local marketing efforts in the Lucas and Wood County system. Early in the One-Stop implementation grant period, members of the local Marketing Workgroup met with the state Marketing Work Team to identify common concerns and interests. Difficulties identified at that meeting included the use of different names and different logos at the state and local level to market One-Stop systems. The state refers to One-Stop centers as "career system centers" while the local system refers to them as "Employment Resource Centers." The logo used at the state level (a fat "1" with arrows encircling it) is markedly different from the local used at the local level (a "1" in the center of a hexagon shaped like a traffic stop sign). The partners in the local One-Stop system decided to keep their own logo. To avoid confusion, a state-local agreement was reached which will allow local logos to be used in conjunction with the state logo, when that appears to be appropriate. For example, while the Job Net kiosks would prominently display the state logo, local logos could also be displayed.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

Ohio requires local One-Stop systems and designated One-Stop centers to provide universal access to the following core services: (1) intake and assessment for all required programs (ES, UI, JTPA, Senior Community Services, Veterans' Employment Services and three of the following four programs: welfare-to-work programs, vocational education, adult basic education, and two-year colleges); (2) orientation and information on all employment and training services; (3) quality labor market information; (4) testing; (5) integrated job development, including information on job openings and referrals to posted jobs; (6) job search assistance; and (7) assistance with UI claims. In addition, the state offered extra points to local areas applying for One-Stop implementation grant funds if local One-Stop systems offered any of the following services: in-depth assessment and counseling, case management, or training and skills validation to certify the qualifications of applicants for jobs with specific employers. The state encouraged, but did not require, local areas to customized core employer and job-seeker services to respond to local labor market conditions.

The basic customer service philosophy in the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop system is that customers are best qualified to make their own decisions regarding their service path; beyond intake and an initial identification of needs, customers are expected to request the services they wish to access. During an initial contact with the receptionist at the Wood County Employment Resource Center, customers are provided with an orientation to the One-Stop center, its partner agencies and its services. Customers are offered the opportunity to register for One-Stop services by completing a Common Intake Form.

Initial information on eligibility requirements for programs available in the community may be provided to the customer by staff from any of the on-site partners. Based upon the information provided on the initial intake form and a discussion with the customer regarding his/her needs and requirements, the customer is referred and/or scheduled for an appointment with on-site JTPA or DHS staff or from one of the local One-Stop partner agencies. During the meeting with an agency/program partner, the individual is provided with detailed information about how to access the services of interest to him/her. As indicated earlier, it is then up to the individual customer to make personal choices about the appropriate next steps, e.g., direct job development assistance, further career development services.

The core services available on-site at the Wood County Employment Resource Center or through referral to partner or affiliated agencies are described below.

- *Information on jobs, careers, labor markets, and employment and training programs* is provided to the universal customer by a wide range of organizations, some of which are oriented to serving the "universal customer" and some of which are oriented to the special needs of targeted population groups. Access to job listings and job matching is also available to all customers through the Ohio Bureau of Employment Service's Ohio Job Net kiosk that supports self registration, independent job search, and self-service referrals. Self-service information is also available in the Resource Room in each Employment Resource Center; a bulletin board in the reception area posts currently available jobs.
- *Application and receipt of UI benefits.* Initial applications are processed by cross-trained ES/UI staff, called Customer Service Representatives. Services are available at the ERC on the scheduled day or through referral to the OBES home site. Once the computer network has been expanded, staff from other agencies will be cross-trained to assist customers with UI applications at their own home sites or at the ERCs.

- *Testing and assessment* using specific tests such as vocational interest and aptitude tests, as well as tests of basic and work-related skills is available through OBES, Penta Vocational School, and Owens Community College. Testing and assessment for targeted populations is provided by the County Departments of Human Services (for welfare recipients), the PIC (for JTPA-eligible customers)and Green Thumb (for older workers).
- *Job openings, information on employer hiring requirements, referrals and job placement assistance is* provided at the Centers by OBES Customer Service staff during on-site days or by referral to an OBES home site. Customers may access automated information on a self-service basis on the Ohio Job Net kiosk at the ERCs or over the Internet. Addition services are provided to members of targeted groups by the agencies serving special populations.

  One of the most popular on-site staff-assisted job search services at the Wood County Employment Resource Center is a Job Club funded by the County Department of Human Services and staffed by a Job Search Coach. This Job Club, offered six hours a day five days a week at the Center, is a mandatory service for many individuals receiving cash assistance from DHS. However, the service is also available to the "universal customer" at no charge. It is a very popular workshop and is the predominant local mechanism used to provide customer assistance in the areas of job referral and job placement services.
- *Referral to available community services and resources* is provided by the Center receptionist, as well as by staff from the local partner agencies. In addition, written materials and brochures on community resources are provided to Center customers, including an excellent brochure developed by the Wood County United Way, called "Help for Hard Times."
- *Access to ABE/GED classes:* ABE/GED classes are provided on-site at the Wood County Employment Resource Center by Penta Vocational School to all DHS or JTPA eligible applicants. Others not eligible for these programs may also enroll. No fees are charged.
- *Self-service access to information on local employers and training providers* is available in the Center's Resource Room.
- *Career planning and career preparation information and activities* are available from the local education and training partners. Although automated career information is available on the full version of Ohio Job Net; it is not yet accessible to customers at the Wood County Employment Resource Center. Penta County Vocational School provides career guidance, counseling and career development activities at its home site. This institution also offers a "Starting Your Own

Business Class" which has received rave reviews from some of its graduates.

If an individual is identified as having special needs (e.g. a substance abuse problem, or a disability) or meeting the eligibility criteria for special programs (e.g., veterans' services or the JOBS program for cash assistance recipients) he/she will usually be referred to the organization or agency that targets its services to that specific client population. For example, persons eligible for or receiving public assistance will be referred to the Wood County Department of Human Services for information on jobs, careers, employment and training programs, while individuals not qualifying to these programs will be referred to providers providing the same core services to the general public, such as OBES or the Penta County Vocational School. Mandatory partners serving special populations include: Green Thumb (older workers); Wood County Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Services (individuals with substance abuse or mental health barriers to employment); Wood County Department of Human Services (welfare recipients); the Rehabilitation Services Commission (individuals with disabilities) and the Toledo Area PIC (economically disadvantaged individuals or dislocated workers).

Special needs will also be addressed through supplementary referrals to a number of affiliated social service agencies. Wood County has a wide range of services available to populations with special needs, particularly those who require financial or other assistance. Referrals to these so-called affiliated partners are made as appropriate. The list of affiliated organizations and agencies includes the Veterans Assistance Center, United Christian Fellowship, and YW Child Care Connections.

Services for Employer Customers

The Lucas and Wood County One-Stop proposal stated that service to employers is "...recognized as the primary reason for the existence of the One-Stop system, and all partners view it as their job to anticipate and deliver services to employers." The Lucas and Wood County partners have tried to orient employers to the new system by highlighting the benefits of coordinated inter-agency job listing and job placement services. During sessions designed to orient employers to the One-Stop system (e.g., community forums, "town halls," and "business after hours" sessions), employers have been invited to provide input as to what other "value added" employer services might be provided, either free of charge or for a user fee. The Governance Council and the

Job Service Employer Committee (JSEC) are also discussing ways to serve employers and keep them informed about One-Stop system enhancements.

Universal services currently available to employers free of charge consist of:

- *Dissemination of job orders*, which are posted on Center bulletin boards as well as on the automated Ohio Job Net kiosks located in each of the Centers. During the second year of One-Stop operations, job orders will be shared with all partners via a networked system of Ohio Job Net computers available at partner home sites as well as at One-Stop centers.
- *Joint One-Stop recruitment efforts* in response to posted job orders, including assessment of job applicants for new and expanding employers.
- *Availability of office space* for use by employers in reviewing applicant resumes, interviewing job applicants, etc.
- *Referral of appropriate candidates* for position openings.
- *Information and assistance* with the layoff process for employers undergoing a reduction in force.

Fee-based services are under general consideration by the local One-Stop system, but at this point their development is not a priority. Services that have been identified for potential development as fee-based services include (1) *customized training* (either on-site training or off-site industry- or employer-specific training provided by a vocational school or community college); and *employer-focused workshops* for managers on such topics as violence in the workplace, diversity training, legal issues affecting employers, etc. In addition, it has been suggested that employers might be open to providing general skill training of new job entrants in the workplace if there were financial incentives—such as reimbursement of training expenses—for hiring workers belonging to identified target groups.

As part of the overall state One-Stop initiative, Ohio is improving the content and delivery modes for local labor market information. One project funded with the state's One-Stop implementation grant funding includes the development of a "micro-occupational information system" to provide integrated information to employers, individuals, and service providers on current and projected labor market demands and related training resources by occupation. Another funded project is the development of an electronic bulletin board to share state labor market data banks with dial-up users. As a result of these projects, a wide range of information is now available to Ohio employers free of charge on Ohio's LMI Home Page. Many employers in Ohio are not yet aware of the availability of this information. The state plans to publicize its new Internet accessibility and expanded labor market information early in 1997.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

Most of the individuals interviewed said that they had not been aware of the One-Stop system prior to their contact with the Wood County Employment Resource Center. Each of the respondents we talked with had heard about the Center through a friend or relative. Customers appeared to appreciate the changes the One-Stop system is trying to bring about in the design and delivery of services. Comments about the services received fell into the following general categories:

- *Initial in-depth orientation.* Individuals indicated that they were provided with a list of the different kinds of assistance available at the One-Stop during their initial visit to the Center.
- *Range of options and assistance.* Respondents indicated that partner agencies and/or on-site staff were available to provide the specific types of assistance needed. For example, staff/partners could assist with resume development, provide a typewriter, type a resume if the customer could not type, etc. In other words, customers felt that the One-Stop staff and partners would do their best to provide whatever was needed to assist them with the job search or transition to another career.
- *Financial assistance.* Customers indicated that they were helped with tuition assistance, applying for a loan from a bank, etc.
- *Programs to suit the individual's requirements.* Customers were assisted variously with accessing skill-based training (through a vocational school), adult basic education/GED training on-site at the One-Stop, entrepreneurial training for starting a business, and on-site job search training and assistance.

Customers indicated that the One-Stop system was different, in both concept and "in reality," from the "old" system. In the previous system, they explained, you went in, registered, and were given an appointment for a posted job, even if it had little to do with your background experience or skills. In the new system, they said, your past experience and skills were seen as valuable and worth working with, rather than something to "toss out." The partner agency counselors and job club instructor helped customers see that their past experience *did* have value in the workplace, and helped them with needed skills upgrading, a better presentation of skills, and the emotional support needed to increase their self image.

A "sense of dignity" was a phrase often used by respondents in describing how they were treated by staff in the local One-Stop system. "They treated me like a person, one of them, not some alien creature." "They encouraged me when I felt like I had nothing to offer." Several respondents said that counselors were "upbeat" at a time when they themselves felt discouraged. Several respondents indicated that the on-site job club was particularly useful, because it provided group support and taught participants how to market themselves. For one individual, this meant the difference between not "snagging" a job interview—prior to participation in the job club—versus being offered three jobs. Personalized assistance was noted by respondents as being very important. They especially appreciated that staff were willing to offer them the personal support they needed as they moved though a particularly difficult time in their work lives. Respondents who had attempted to use the automated Ohio Job Net kiosk could not find suitable job matches; others responded that they simply "did not think it would have anything" for them.

Employers

Employers indicated that they thought the system was "more user-friendly for both customers and employers." Employers particularly applauded eliminating duplication of effort by having all agencies "under one roof." As employers, they appreciated having only "one number to call" to post a job listing and request referrals, as well as a single source for labor market information. They also appreciated being able to contact the same staff person over time and the opportunity to develop rapport with a One-Stop staff member who understood their employment needs and would work with them to find a good match.

Most of the employers contacted in connection with the evaluation tend to use the One-Stop system for postings entry-level jobs rather than openings for more highly-skilled individuals. Although aware of the new option of posting job openings directly via the Internet, most still use the telephone to post job orders with ES/UI staff. They are aware that postings appear on the Ohio Job Net kiosks as well as at all OBES and One-Stop locations. They are also aware that they have a choice about whether to provide all job seekers with employer information or whether to suppress employer information on the public listing.

Employers identified their biggest challenge as attracting qualified job applicants in the current tight labor market. Lack of basic skills, they said, is wide spread, making it important to involve schools in the delivery of skill-based training and adult basic education to individuals who want to enter the labor market or make a career transition. A few employers expressed dissatisfaction with the job matching and referral procedures in place prior to the One-Stop system. In the past, they indicated, applicants had not been carefully screened and were not qualified for the available positions. They hoped that under the One-Stop system, candidates would be better prepared for the job interview, more experienced or trained in the position for which they were applying, and provided with more careful public agency follow-up after placement.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Wood County Employment Resource Center offers an example of a One-Stop center in which one of the primary on-site partners is the agency responsible for providing welfare benefits and welfare-to-work services. As stated by the Director of the Wood County Department of Human Services, it was "natural" for the Human Services agency to play a major role in the design and development of the local One-Stop center, because it played the key role in building an inter-agency case management network prior to the One-Stop system and because the rest of the JOBS and related human-services programs are located within the same physical complex as the One-Stop Center. This close link with the welfare system is particularly appropriate now that the county will be dealing with a number of welfare reform implementation issues.

The realization of the One-Stop vision in Wood County will depend on the achievement of electronic linkages among the different agencies in this rural county. In this environment, a "no wrong door" approach is critical to ensure access for county residents who are closer to the home sites of partner agencies and affiliated agencies than to the Employment Resource Center. In the interim, the co-location of all partners at the ERC one day a week—and the full-time location of a PIC staff member at the Wood County ERC as Center co-manger—are clear statements of commitment to the development of a seamless system by the participating agency partners.

As a local *system*, the Lucas and Wood County One-Stop has achieved participation by a wide range of organizational partners, with disability-related, welfare, and educational institutions well integrated into the total program. OBES, although the lead agency for the DOL Implementation Grant at the state level, is merely one among a number of equal partners within the Lucas/Wood County system. As a *center*, however, the Wood County Employment Resources Center has not yet achieved widespread public visibility and, at the time of the evaluation site visit, was receiving a low volume of on-site customers.

Respondents involved in the Lucas/Wood County One-Stop system agreed that—although the first year effort had been difficult and time consuming—both partners and customers had benefited from the system transformation efforts to date. Although the consensus governance procedures as originally designed were somewhat cumbersome, partners were able to make some mid-year simplifications to speed up the implementation of Governance Council decisions. When state One-Stop monitors criticized the local system for not developing formal inter-agency agreements, local partners defended themselves, saying that they had been able to make considerable progress without developing detailed written agreements.

Key challenges still faced by the local system include (1) developing a more efficient integrated referral and tracking management information system; (2) ensuring that customers have effective access to labor market information to support them in making good decisions about careers, training, and jobs;[4] and (3) responding to the job development/job placement demands that will be created by federal and state welfare reform legislation.

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[4] The single Ohio Job Net kiosk available at the Wood County ERC may not be sufficient to meet this need.

APPENDIX S

STATE OF TEXAS
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During May 1996

STATE OF TEXAS
One-Stop Profile

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STATE OF TEXAS
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The state of Texas has embarked on an ambitious plan to fully integrate over twenty distinct workforce development programs under one administrative roof, the Texas Workforce Commission. This reorganization has entailed massive state-level organizational change, and has contributed to the rapid pace of program integration at local One-Stop "Career Centers." Fundamental to statewide efforts has been a strategic vision for a statewide system of Career Centers in which customers can conveniently access information and services tailored to their specific needs.

Texas workforce development programs have a long history of coordination and co-location. For example, a "comprehensive office model" project dating back to the 1970s involved the merging of job information services, labor exchange, and inter-agency employment development teams. More recently, since 1990, the state has encouraged the co-location and coordination of services offered by the Texas Employment Commission (TEC) and the Department of Human Services (DHS) on behalf of residents receiving public assistance. TEC, for example, has held a statewide DHS contract for the delivery of work-related services to public assistance recipients under both the JOBS program for AFDC recipients and the Food Stamp E&T program. In addition, many local sites have experience coordinating the delivery of JTPA and ES services through co-location and coordination agreements. These experiences helped pave the way for the emergence of the statewide One-Stop initiative in 1992 and 1993.

The state's One-Stop mission is "to place Texans in jobs and equip workers with the skills that foster economic development." Stated system-level goals include the development of:

- a statewide system of local workforce development centers where all clients and employers can conveniently access a network of information and services responsive to their individual needs; and
- a state and local strategic planning, evaluation, and accountability system for the state's workforce development programs and activities.

In addition, the state has established One-Stop program goals of providing Texas residents with the skills necessary for educational and career advancement (including adult literacy, basic education skills, and specific occupational skills) as well as providing youth with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for the transition into productive careers and lifelong learning. The One-Stop initiative in Texas has been explicitly intertwined with the goals of welfare reform, which include using a "work first" approach to increase the percentage of Texans who become and remain independent of public financial assistance.

As described later in this profile, the state's vision of One-Stop services begins with the dissemination of a number of state-developed technology-based products to assist job seekers and employers (e.g., job matching and career information systems, as well as a "consumer report card" system of information on local education and training providers), but also includes the development and implementation of a wide range of locally-developed integrated core services tailored to the needs of individual job seekers, students, and employers.

To accomplish these ambitious goals, the state's One-Stop strategy emphasizes local initiative and control in the planning and operation of local workforce development boards ("Boards") responsible for the design and operation of local One-Stop centers. The state role in the development of local One-Stop systems is to encourage and support the development of local One-Stop models rather than to disseminate a standardized state design.

Key state design criteria emphasize the need to involve all DOL-funded programs in at least one operational full-service One-Stop center within six months of workforce board certification and to plan for the inclusion of a wider range of local partners by the end of the first year of One-Stop operations. In areas where they have begun to operate, boards assume many of the planning, monitoring evaluation, and fiscal functions for local workforce programs. Although local areas retain the option of not forming boards, and can maintain or expand their present workforce governance systems, *all* areas are encouraged to develop One-Stop Centers.

Technology is perceived as a key factor in developing an integrated workforce development system and realizing the vision of providing quality information to a universal customer base. In this regard, the Texas State Occupational Information and

Coordinating Committee (SOICC) has provided the foundation for a labor market and career information system.

A number of key variables have influenced One-Stop planning, design, and implementation in Texas. These include, among other things, (1) the rapid pace of organizational change; (2) extreme diversity within the state and a resulting sensitivity to issues of local autonomy; (3) historical links between workforce development restructuring and welfare reforms; and (4) strong political and legislative support for revitalizing workforce development efforts. Each of these contextual variables is discussed briefly below.

- *Major reorganization and consolidation of workforce development programs have affected the pace of implementation of the statewide One-Stop Career Center system.* There are dramatic changes occurring at both the state and the local levels. In some cases, reorganization has prompted rapid co-location and integration of services. At the same time, because of the breadth of changes to the Texas workforce system, some One-Stop initiatives have been delayed until the organizational and operational structure of the Workforce Commission becomes institutionalized. To some degree, local levels have had to wait for the major reorganization to "shake out" at the state level before they can get consistent guidance and direction.
- *Texas's large size, diversity, and history of strong local autonomy have prompted the state to adopt a flexible One-Stop implementation model.* Texas is comprised of 254 counties, 35 SDAs, and 28 Workforce Development Areas. The state has very wealthy urban and suburban areas with highly diversified economies. At the same time, a fifteen-county area along the Mexican border is the poorest region in the nation. And whereas Texas is home to some of the nation's top universities, half of working-age Texans read at the lowest levels of literacy. Responding to this high degree of diversity and aware of the importance of local autonomy, the state has recognized the need to support a number of different One-Stop models designed and governed locally, rather than proposing a more standardized state system. The state therefore sees itself in an *advisory* and *supportive* role for local areas with respect to One-Stop implementation.
- *Workforce development initiatives and welfare reform are closely linked.* One important legislative initiative, HB 1863, for example, was originally conceived as a welfare reform measure. Based on a "work first" approach, the bill was originally intended to encourage an increased emphasis on employment, training, temporary assistance, and support services. When finally enacted, however, it had become much

broader in scope, touching nearly every facet of workforce development. Because of this unique legislative history, One-Stop implementation in Texas faces a dual challenge: on the one hand, the state wants the system to become universally accessible; on the other hand, there is a clear concern for addressing the needs of those who may be less prepared to enter the workforce. This is likely to result in extremely broad service menus at One-Stop Centers, a careful balancing act to meet the needs of employers and job seekers, and serious questions of how to prioritize different needs given limited program dollars.

- *There is political support at the highest levels of state government for revitalizing workforce development.* State respondents indicated that there is strong bi-partisan support from the legislature and governor for workforce development reform, and that the administration has acted decisively on policy recommendations of the state's Human Resource Investment Council called the Texas Council on Workforce and Economic Competitiveness ("State Council"). One result of this political support has been the development of a high-quality state-level One-Stop team, whose head was the former executive director of the State Council.

EVOLUTION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF STATE ONE-STOP DESIGN

The statewide One-Stop approach to the delivery of services in Texas began with a series of state-sponsored studies and legislative initiatives. In 1992, an influential report from the State Comptroller's Office focused on the state's workforce development efforts. This report highlighted the low level of literacy among state residents and sought to focus attention on improving basic skills, which has since been a consistent part of the state design for One-Stop services.

In 1993, Senate Bill 642, "The Workforce and Economic Competitiveness Act," was passed. Among other things, the Act (1) provided for the creation of a State Council to advocate for the development of an integrated workforce development system; (2) gave a mandate to the State Council to designate local workforce development areas throughout the state (a total of 28 areas were created); and (3) encouraged local officials to form local workforce development boards to plan and oversee the delivery of all local workforce training and services programs.

SB 642 identified six core services to be available at local workforce development centers established by local boards: (1) labor market information; (2) common intake and eligibility determination for all local workforce development programs and services; (3) independent assessment of individual needs and the development of individual service strategies; (4) coordinated and continuous case management and counseling; (5) individual referral for services, including basic education, classroom skills training, on-the-job training, and customized training; and (6) supportive services. Although not mandated by statute, the state also requires that certain employer services be in place at workforce centers.

In 1995, two events further promoted the development of the One-Stop initiative in Texas. First, the federal One-Stop Implementation Grant provided funding to encourage the formation of local workforce development boards and local One-Stop systems. Second, the passage of House Bill 1863 mandated the integration of workforce development programs, creating the Texas Workforce Commission, a "super-consolidated" agency. As a result of these factors, the Federal One-Stop effort received strong support within the state of Texas, particularly as the initiative related to program consolidation.

The state has adopted a phased approach to One-Stop planning and implementation. During the first phase beginning in early 1995, five pilot areas were chosen to receive implementation grant funds. Another seven areas were selected for implementation in mid-1995. Further, it was expected that each workforce development area in the state would have at least one One-Stop Career Center by the end of 1996. Within these Centers, the state encourages the adoption of a strategy of three tiers of service (self-service, group services, and individualized services) as the means to achieving universal access while still addressing the needs of customers who need more intensive assistance. The intended key state-level functions are viewed as: (1) guiding and supporting the development of local One-Stops in planning and operation, including the development of the planning guidelines and benchmarkings (which rely in part on local self-assessment); (2) promoting peer-to-peer exchanges; (3) taking the lead on the development of evaluation and performance measures, and (4) developing and refining technology-based products and MIS systems to support integrated intake and case management.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

There are two major entities responsible for workforce governance, the Texas Council on Workforce and Economic Competitiveness and the Texas Workforce Commission, which is responsible for administrating the workforce development programs. Currently housed within the Workforce Commission, a "One-Stop team" functions as the staff-level planning body for the One-Stop initiative.

Senate Bill 642 created the State Council, and charged it with planning, developing, and evaluating an integrated workforce system. With its establishment in September 1995, the State Council replaced five different previous state advisory committees and councils. The State Council's extremely broad role in the One-Stop system is to set overall state workforce development goals and policies and guide the Texas Workforce Commission in the administration of the integrated state workforce development system. The Council's duties include identifying local workforce development areas and boundaries, developing criteria for certification, approving local workforce development board plans, and making recommendations to the governor about such initiatives as school-to-work.[1] The Council has also conducted needs assessments on a variety of customer groups, and has established statewide goals and core performance measures for service delivery.

The Texas Workforce Commission, state-level agency responsible for administering workforce development programs, replaced the Texas Employment Commission (TEC) and all its previous functions as of June 1, 1996. The TWC is built on the infrastructure of the TEC, which was the fiscal agent and grant administrator for One-Stop implementation. TEC administered all unemployment insurance (UI) and employment service (ES) funds through 11 regional offices and 200 local offices and service points. TEC also administered a variety of other programs including Work and Family Policies, Job Counseling for Displaced Homemakers, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Veterans Employment (VETS), Project RIO (Reintegration of Offenders), and was the contractor selected by the Texas Department of Human Services for the delivery of JOBS and Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSE&T) delivery.

The State Occupation Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC) which had previously been housed under the Texas Employment Commission, will also move under TWC's umbrella. SOICC will continue its mandate to coordinate the development and dissemination of labor market, occupational, and career information for five agencies: (1) the Texas Education Agency (TEA) including K-12 and higher education; (2) the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB); (3) the Texas Department of Commerce (TDOC); (4) the Texas Rehabilitation Commission; and (5) the former Texas Employment Commission.

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[1] The State Council has the planning grant for School-to-Work in Texas. Implementation has been moved from Higher Education (THECB) to the Texas Workforce Commission.

Finally, the TWC is now responsible for administering a number of workforce development programs that were previously administered by other agencies. Thus, TWC is currently responsible for all the programs included in Table 1.

With the exception of TEC, all other agencies that previously administered workforce development programs remain intact, having relinquished authority over only those programs merged into the Workforce Commission. By March, 1996, JTPA and other programs formerly administered by Texas Department of Commerce's workforce division, as well as JOBS and Food Stamp Employment and Training, had merged with TEC under the Workforce Commission. Other programmatic responsibilities under the Commission include the regulation of proprietary schools, Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), relevant child care programs, and adult basic education. Most of the agencies listed above continue to coordinate their workforce planning efforts through representation on the State Council.[2]

A "One-Stop implementation team" was formed in January 1995 as an inter-agency team under the direction the former executive director of the State Council. This One-Stop team was comprised of staff assigned from TEC, TDOC, the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), and the Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS). In February, 1996, these five part time staff members of the One-Stop implementation team were replaced by two full time employees of the One-Stop office under the Texas Workforce Commission.[3]

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[2] This is done through representation by the Chairs of the State Board of Education, THECB, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the presiding officers of the Board of Human Service and TDOC's Policy Advisory Board.

[3] For the purpose of this profile, "One-Stop Implementation Team," or "State One-Stop Team" are used to refer both the agency team, comprised of representatives from 5 agencies, in place from 1/95-2/96 and the full-time staff of the One-Stop office under TEC/Workforce Commission in existence after 2/15/96.

Table 1
Programs Administered by the Texas Workforce Commission

Programs	Previous Administrative Entity
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) - Employment Service (ES) - Work and Family Policies - Job Counseling for Displaced Homemakers - Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) - Job Corps - Veterans Employment (VETS) - Project RIO	*Texas Employment Commission*
- JTPA - Literacy programs	*Texas Department of Commerce (TDOC)*
- Adult Education - Proprietary school regulation - Apprenticeship training - Education and job training coordination	*Texas Education Agency (TEA)*
- Post-secondary vocational and technical job training (CJT)	*Community Colleges, School Districts*
- JOBS and related employment and child care programs - Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSE&T) - Program support for JOBS and FSE&T	*Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS)*
- Senior Citizens Employment	*Texas Department on Aging*
- School-to-Work (Planning Activities)	*Texas Council on Workforce and Economic Competitiveness*
- Community Service	*Governor's Office*

State Framework for Local Governance

HB 1863, in addition to mandating the consolidation of all workforce development programs, encouraged the formation of local workforce development boards. Article 11 of HB 1863 established a framework for decentralized planning through these boards, which were to be made up of representatives from the business, labor, and education sectors, as well as community based-organizations and the general public. Although the state expects that local workforce boards will become the most prevalent system of local governance, local areas retain the option to maintain distinct advisory and governing bodies such as Private Industry Councils (PICs), Job Service Employer Committees (JSECs), Quality Workforce Planning Committees (QWFPCs), or other multi-agency management teams. At the time of the evaluation visit, 12 out of 28 workforce development areas in the state had completed applications for workforce development boards and seven had been certified.

The Texas Workforce Commission plays three roles vis-à-vis these boards: it administers state funds, oversees the operation of the boards, and provides advice to local boards and centers. As fiscal agent, the Commission continues to be the state administrator of workforce development funds. In its oversight capacity, the Commission reviews local workforce development board plans to insure that local areas have met a set of minimum criteria for certification, and then forwards its recommendations on to the State Council and to the Governor for final approval. The Texas Workforce Commission is also charged with conducting on-site reviews to ensure that minimum criteria for local One-Stops are met. In its advisory capacity to local boards, the Commission has disseminated "Workforce Development Board Planning Guidelines" to the 28 designated workforce delivery areas in the state. When requested, the Commission provides technical assistance to local areas in the process of forming boards.

Local boards in turn are responsible for planning, contracting, oversight, and evaluation of local service providers, but the maintenance of federal standards for categorical programs is the joint responsibility of boards and the Texas Workforce Commission. One major difference between the system of local boards and previous systems is the separation of administrative and service delivery provision functions. Under the workforce board system, local areas will have much greater discretion in selecting service providers, including the possible option of selecting non-governmental entities to deliver local workforce development services funded by DOL and other federal and state sources.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

The One-Stop implementation team has served as a facilitator for inter-agency communication among various partners, has helped to coordinate discussion on integration of workforce development programs at the state level, and has provided a central point of contact at the state for many local One-Stop sites.

During the initial stages of One-Stop implementation, a crucial step for creating the conditions for state-level communications involved the formation of an interagency One-Stop team. Prior to the formation of the integrated TWC, this team began to formulate innovative ideas and practices for encouraging inter-agency partnering. The One-Stop team's function of facilitating inter-program communication at the state level may become less important over time as the integration of TWC becomes complete. As staff cohesion builds within the Workforce Commission, it is likely to become easier to elicit input from different workforce development programs under the Commission and to promote cross-program staffing and training.

In terms of providing a point of contact at the state for many local One-Stop sites, the One-Stop team is likely to continue to play an important role. The team has created both formal and informal mechanisms for communication between the state and local areas making the transition to One-Stop Centers. These mechanisms include:

- *Participating directly* in helping to solve problems that arise in existing or planned One-Stop implementation areas. One-Stop team respondents see their role as facilitators for One-Stop Center operators. In this capacity, the One-Stop team often advocates on behalf of local Centers among the various state agency partners.
- *Convening regional forums* held at different locations within the state to communicate about One-Stop activities at the state level, and to determine regional concerns, solicit input, and identify local One-Stop priorities and barriers.
- *Providing a channel of information from local sites to various policy-making and technical assistance entities*. The One-Stop team, for example, maintains regular communication with SOICC and the State Council. Based on the experience of local Centers, the team provides input to state-level workgroups charged with such tasks as developing performance measurement and evaluation standards.

- *Holding local conferences* with program staff, Career Center operators, and, where applicable, with local workforce development boards, either existing or in the process of formation. For staff and Center operators, these conferences are intended to present progress reports from pilot sites, status reports on state systems, and models of One-Stop development. Although these meetings often grow out of formal bi-annual One-Stop benchmark visits, the discussions that follow are often very informal.

Program administrators in local areas saw direct communication with the state One-Stop team as extremely valuable. One local respondent described the team as a strong advocate for One-Stops, "trying to grease the skids" with the variety of partner state agencies involved in One-Stop. Periodic meetings with local One-Stop partners are also an extremely important part of the state-level One-Stop team's communication efforts. These meetings are designed to "bring to the table" representatives from as many One-Stop partner agencies as possible. It has been the experience of the state One-Stop team that informal communication is often most effective, and these meetings are characterized as often *informational* and *interactive*.

These informal meetings often grow out of more formalized "benchmarking" visits, which are based on a set of broad, but clear targets. With the recognition that "expertise regarding how One-Stop should be implemented is at the local level," benchmarking is based primarily on local self-assessments, with visits from the state One-Stop team intended for verification. State respondents emphasize the importance of inter-agency teams in site visits, with teams generally comprised of two visitors from different agencies. These teams look for measured progress, and attempt to avoid being "overly quantitative" in their assessments.

The benchmarkings visits are intended to provide the opportunity for local sites to describe their current situation and the problems they have encountered. In addition to benchmarking by the state, the use of peer resources for mutual technical assistance is strongly encouraged, end-of-implementation-year reviews are conducted by peer review teams, and representatives of local area One-Stops have formed quality assistance groups using peer review processes.

Many sites approach these processes as an opportunity to cull suggestions and request technical assistance from state staff and peer reviewers, while other sites prefer to deal with any problems they encounter locally. State respondents indicated that they respect both approaches, and that they are concerned with maintaining flexibility in dealing with a wide range of concerns related to communicating with local sites while continuing to communicate the need for systemic reform and program consolidation. They emphasized that a coordinated plan for state-to-local communication must take into consideration the variety of forms that One-Stop has adopted in different parts of the state and the varying stages of development at existing or planned One-Stop sites.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The state has used One-Stop implementation funding to realize its vision of promoting One-Stop pilot projects throughout the state, and to develop a sophisticated technological infrastructure capable of supporting labor market and other information systems. During the first and second year of the One-Stop Implementation grant, Texas received a total of $13.4 million (including $1.7 million in LMI funding the first year to support the One-Stop initiative). Approximately $3.5 million (roughly one-quarter) of the total One-Stop funding across both years has been reserved for use at the state level to support the development of financial systems, performance measurement and evaluation systems, and the development and refinement of technology-based customer products, such as the state's career information systems and occupational wage database.

Of the remaining implementation and LMI grant funds, $500,000 has been allocated to providing financial incentives for the formation of local workforce development boards, $5 million has been provided to 12 local areas to support the implementation of "pilot" One-Stop systems, $2.5 million has been earmarked for supporting One-Stop system development in the 16 areas that did not receive pilot funding, and $1.5 million has been allocated to support local implementation efforts related to improved LMI, including the purchase of hardware and software to implement the state's career information systems and to develop eligibility and assessment software for the pilot sites.

Perhaps the most important issue in Texas One-Stop development in the future will have to do with the integration of funding streams. When legislation mandating program consolidation (HB 1863) was passed, it was anticipated that many of the fiscal accountability issues associated with categorical funding streams would have disappeared by fiscal year 1997 with block granting of federal workforce development programs. During the time of the site visit, it appeared much less likely than it had even a year before that Congress would pass block grant legislation for workforce programs. This situation has to some extent hindered Texas' plans for administering integrated services, because all of the reporting and eligibility issues and regulatory requirements of the DOL categorical programs are still in force.

At the time of the evaluation visit, for example, the state was reluctant to pilot the cost-sharing approaches described in the DOL cost allocation TAG, largely because of concerns about potential audit exceptions. Nevertheless, the approach to integrated workforce development systems supported by the state implies that the services provided by One-Stop centers *will* be supported using funding for categorical programs. Under these conditions, local workforce development boards and local service providers will continue to be responsible for expending moneys from each categorical funding stream in a manner that is consistent with the legislative and regulatory requirements for individual programs.

Another unexpected challenge faced in One-Stop implementation in Texas had to do with the issue of preparing physical facilities for One-Stop delivery. During the planning process, the degree to which facilities issues would become important had been underestimated. Many existing state buildings were not suitable for One-Stop Centers, leaving many potential Centers the option of either investing in renovation of existing structures or leasing commercial space, which also often required some alteration of floor plans to accommodate One-Stops. Key respondents noted that it has been a time-consuming process to obtain federal waivers for the expenditure of One-Stop grants on the rehabilitation or renovation of physical facilities.

RELEVANCE OF THE STATE DESIGN TO THE FOUR FEDERAL GOALS

Universal Access

One-Stop Centers are envisioned as central points of access to information and services that address the needs of all individuals in an area. An important objective of Texas's One-Stop system is the achievement of the federal goal of *universality*, interpreted as giving "all population groups, including individuals and employers, access to a broad array of services and information from a comprehensive assortment of employment, education and training programs." "Customer empowerment" is a key concept in the realization of universality.

To achieve universal access, the state has implemented a system of three tiers of service. In this system, the majority of customers access self-service options (the first tier), with progressively smaller numbers of customers participating in group services (the second tier), and then individualized services (the third tier). By providing access to more self-directed services, the emerging One-Stop system can manage an increasing number of customers in an environment of diminishing funding for employment and training.

Career Centers are committed to providing a professional atmosphere providing access to high-quality information and services regardless of whether individuals are eligible for specific programs. At the same time, several questions still remain regarding the degree to which the vision of universal access will cause a shift of resources and opportunity from targeted populations to a universal population. Respondents indicated that services to targeted populations would remain an important component within the state's One-Stop vision and planning despite the goal of working toward serving a universal population. Key respondents are aware of the continuing needs of special populations, and believe it necessary to honor an ethical commitment to see that they continue to be appropriately served.

The provision of services to a universal population, therefore, is perceived as an incremental process requiring a balancing of the needs of targeted populations with the needs of the broader public. As described below, optimizing self-directed services (including improving public access to a variety of electronic technologies and printed reference materials) and expanding opportunities for group and specialized services are important steps toward reaching the federal goal of universality.

Customer Choice

Improving customer choice for workforce development services is seen as one of the most crucial objectives within the statewide One-Stop system. Important keys to enhancing customer choice are (1) providing access to quality comprehensive information and (2) working to help customers understand the range of workforce development options available to them.

A major response to the federal objective of *customer choice* has been the development of access to a variety of technological options. All One-Stops are required to submit plans to provide for coordinated use of existing and planned technological resources, including direct on-site access to labor market and career development information through user-friendly terminals in One-Stop Career Centers. Job listings can also be accessed from remote home or business locations, and through "Job Express" kiosks located in many areas throughout the state (see section on LMI below).

Customer choice is achieved by providing "tiers" of service made up of "self-service" options and "enhanced" services:

Tier I *Information & Self-Service.* This service tier includes self-directed information searches of computerized LMI and education and training options, as well as use of printed and audio-visual reference materials.

Tier II *Group Services.* Services available in this service tier include workshops on the job search process, explanations of UI benefits, and job matching.

Tier III *Intensive & Individualized Services.* Services in this tier are provided by case managers, who serve as customers' primary contact within the system. These more personal services are considered very necessary components of a responsive service delivery system. They are generally available through categorically funded programs.

By providing a flexible design in which customers have a choice of service level, the system frees staff members from many formerly routine activities, giving them more time to provide more personal assistance for those customers who need it. Moreover, by encouraging the efforts of One-Stops to coordinate with other agencies and community groups, the state has actively promoted the concept of broad-based community participation in the provision of employment and training services to people with serious barriers to employment.

Integrated Services

The goal of the Texas One-Stop system is to transform service delivery from a program-based approach to a system geared to meeting the needs of the individuals served. One-Stops are strongly encouraged to establish linkages with other organizations and systems to develop a "holistic approach" to meeting client needs. Centers are expected to take active steps to become the principal points of contact for employers and individuals for *any* employment related activity. Toward these goals, One-Stops are required to demonstrate increasing levels of program integration over time.

In addition to providing access to all required DOL-funded programs by the end of the first implementation year, all One-Stops are required to submit a plan to provide full access to programs mandated by HB 1863, such as Food Stamp Employment and

Training, JOBS, and Adult Education programs. Other minimum criteria for local One-Stop systems include providing labor market information, implementing common intake and eligibility, and assessing individual needs. Depending on local visions for One-Stops, Career Centers are encouraged to establish links with other governmental and non-governmental programs with a focus on workforce development, and to provide on-site access to as many other non-mandated services as feasible.

At present, statewide One-Stop system integration in Texas is based upon sharing information among service providers and the coordination of activities among programs. Although programmatic cross-training is not a requirement for One-Stop sites, local partners are encouraged to develop cross-program training related to the specific circumstances at individual sites.

Nearly all our respondents emphasized that One-Stop implementation should be thought of as a continuing process. Much of the success of service integration will ultimately depend on the ability to manage a diversity of funding streams in such a way as to create "seamless services" from the customer's perspective. The broad scope of integration efforts mandated by HB 1863 has also created a series of challenges. As described in the section on MIS below, some of these challenges involve realizing the goals of integrated intake and case management across a broad range of the Workforce Commission programs.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

There is a strong commitment in Texas to establishing a One-Stop system that is *performance-driven* and *outcome-based*. The State Council has been instrumental in developing a core set of performance measures approved by the governor in 1994. These are based on labor market outcomes (entered employment rate, earnings gain rate, and employment retention rate), a variety of learning outcomes (educational achievement rate), access equity measures, and customer satisfaction/quality assurance measures for individual One-Stop Centers. In addition to state efforts, a variety of locally designed performance measures have been designed.

The State Council, in consultation with SOICC, has provided a set of clear outcome-based performance standards for One-Stops spanning the range of existing Workforce Commission programs. In addition, local sites and regional One-Stop networks are to establish procedures for measuring performance relevant to local conditions. For example, several of the Centers have sign-in sheets and customer satisfaction surveys, which in addition to surveys on customer satisfaction and usage included SOICC LMI programs, allows them to document the number of clients served, document Center use, and incorporate customer feedback into the local planning process. Other Centers have considered issuing cards to customers that would be used like library cards and enable Centers to track service utilization patterns.

Performance measurements under a One-Stop environment, however, continue to be a conceptual challenge at both the state and local levels, particularly for service providers that have traditionally focused on measuring performance within distinct categorical programs. State respondents have argued that the first three One-Stop goals of universal access, customer choice, and integrated or "seamless" services require a "paradigm shift" in the way that performance and outcomes are measured. Issues such as who gets credit for placement among various agencies involved in One-Stop are less relevant than in the past, particularly in light of the desire to efficiently consolidate workforce development services.

Key respondents pointed to several major changes that have occurred since programmatic performance measures were conceptualized. One major change is the ability of individuals to gain electronic access to job and training information. Another change has to do with the gradual shift in the employer/employee "social contract" regarding life-time employment. Under these conditions, respondents believed that measures should be geared toward strategies that emphasize "success in life-long learning" and minimizing periods of unemployment. Existing programmatic measures were criticized as taking an "overly-narrow view of the real benefits of workforce development." As a result, respondents argued for taking into consideration the possibility that *job* security may no longer be a realistic goal, and that long-term *employment* security may be a more adequate measure of systemic success. In the absence of comprehensive systemic measures, the state has continued to build on existing program-based performance standards in addition to addressing the new performance issues associated with integrated workforce development systems.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

State capacity and technical assistance has been implemented through two major avenues: ad-hoc "team-building" at local Centers and more formal "regional forums." These approaches are briefly described below.

From late 1994 through 1995, there was a dedicated staff position for One-Stop capacity building. Recently, however—in part because of the reorganization of state-level workforce development efforts—many of the state's planned "capacity building" efforts have been deferred until after the consolidation of the Workforce Commission is completed. At the time of the site visit, there were no designated "capacity building" personnel, but the Workforce Commission's Technical Assistance Director, together with other members of the One-Stop team, served as *de facto* facilitators for local team building.

Much of their work was done informally, and can best be described as "putting out brush-fires" through conflict management with Career Center partners. When technical assistance teams are asked to address local inter-agency issues, they often initiate day-long meetings with key local agency representatives with the objective of finding ways to overcome obstacles to cooperation. State teams are able to approach these local group-building exercises with a good deal of sympathy because they have all gone through a similar process of forming state-level inter-agency teams.

A major challenge to capacity building throughout the state revolved around the question of how to build strong local partnerships in an era of declining overall funding for workforce development. State respondents were clear in their understanding that program consolidation and declining funding might create "winners and losers" among various One-Stop partners, and this reality made the "selling" of the idea of forming partnerships and strategic alliances difficult. State respondents, however, continually emphasized the degree to which One-Stop concepts were accepted enthusiastically in many areas of the state, and that there was enough "local wisdom" in the majority of these areas to build effective One-Stop Centers.

Four regional capacity building forums took place in September and October, 1995 on such themes as discussion of the state's One-Stop framework, managing the change process, and customer satisfaction. As part of its efforts to further promote its vision of One-Stop Career Centers, the Workforce Commission also recently sponsored a major capacity building initiative in the form of a statewide "Texas Career Center Conference" in May 1996 that was attended by approximately 1200 participants (also see "Marketing" below).

The state team continues to encourage local Centers to cross-train their partners, and to voice their concerns about collaboration in a constructive way. Consensus building is seen as a process that demands time, a commitment among partners to "put all their issues on the table," and a willingness to go through all of the stages of group process. Key One-Stop players believe that the rewards of maintaining a central vision, and seeing this vision become realized, are great. In spite of the many challenges involved in capacity building, one state respondent reported that "we constantly hear that doing Career Centers is *fun*. People are genuinely excited about going to work, and about making this happen."

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

The state of Texas has consistently excelled in developing enhanced labor market information (LMI) and other technology-based products, and customer access to information technology is seen as a cornerstone of the Texas One-Stop system. SOICC has been responsible for developing recent career development systems. These have included a case management tool (called RESCUE) originally intended to help dislocated workers determine the type of training needed in order to speed re-entry into the labor market and a user-friendly comprehensive career information delivery system (called Texas CARES) oriented to career exploration for people with little work experience. SOICC also continues to update work on existing labor market information systems including expanding the labor market planning capabilities of its LMI system. SOICC is also the lead organization in a national consortium to develop a consumer report system (CRS).

RESCUE has most recently been adopted by the Texas One-Stop Career Centers to assist the larger audience of Texas citizens who are using it to explore career alternatives and develop personal action plans for career development. This product provides information about occupations, training programs, social services, public schools and colleges, regional industries and employers, and a variety economic and demographic information. Texas CARES combines approaches intended to develop self-knowledge and to access occupational and educational information, and allows users to explore both educational and occupational options. The system integrates video materials, "help balloons" and various easily understandable icons which assist users in finding information on career skills and other occupational information. It was expected that CARES and RESCUE would be accessible at nearly all of the One-Stop centers by the end of June, 1996.

The Workforce Commission's labor exchange electronic labor exchange system (Job Express) provides an additional tool for implementing a vision of an "information-driven workforce development system" that is readily accessible to individual customers and responsive to employer needs. Currently, 40% to 50% of all job listings on Job Express are "unsuppressed," allowing job-seekers to contact employers directly through a self-directed electronic job search. Another 30-40% of job listings are "partially unsuppressed" (i.e. the job description is available to all customers, but the employer's name is not shown). Partially unsuppressed listings require some screening by local offices, which determine if the prospective employee meets the minimal qualifications for the position and verify whether the position is still available. Only 20% of statewide job listings are currently "fully suppressed," available to job seekers only through the Workforce Commission.

Job Express can be accessed through Workforce Commission offices and One-Stop Centers, and is also available through a toll-free bulletin board service (BBS) and through Job Express "Kiosks." Customers can find these kiosks in areas of high pedestrian traffic, such as malls and 24-hour discount stores located throughout the state. In addition to providing access to the Job Express database, these kiosks are connected to America's Job Bank, which contains job listings from all over the country, and the Governor's Job Bank, which lists State government employment opportunities. At the time of the state visit, the Job Express system had experienced in a one-year period a six-fold increase in the number of customers accessing the automated system or "hits." There are currently plans to provide access to several of these information systems through the Workforce Commission's World Wide Web site.

Other information systems and technology-based products in existence or under development include:

- an automated planning model and database (SOCRATES), which provides extensive labor market information to public planners, employers, workforce development specialists, and labor market analysts within each of the 24 Quality Work Force Planning Committees in the state;
- a Consumer Report System (CRS), for which Texas is the lead state in a consortium of six states. CRS database and application software is intended to supply "report cards" on the labor market outcomes achieved by participants in local education and training offerings; and

- a geographic-based system called GEM which provides demographic, employment, and income information for each of Texas' 254 counties, in an easily understandable narrative form. This system was scheduled to be tested in Texas Career Centers on or near the time of the evaluation visit.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The state has attempted to take the lead in the development of information systems to support integrated client services, including the development of an integrated system for eligibility and intake and for the sharing of service referral, case management, and program outcome information across program partners.

Restructuring of management information systems in Texas is taking place both against the background of consolidation of workforce programs and in an era of rapidly evolving computer technologies that have allowed for the provision of a variety of information services to customers. But although clear progress has been made in some areas, such as voice-activated UI claims-taking, progress in other areas has been slowed down by a variety of obstacles, including competition among different state agency partners and their proposed MIS contractors, the distinct reporting needs of different categorical funding streams, and concerns about confidentiality.

The automation of unemployment insurance (UI) benefits through voice response units (VRUs) is one example of the automation of formerly routine staff activities. Applicants for continuing UI benefits can now file their claims through a completely automated telephone system. Most beneficiaries of UI now choose the option of using VRU services rather than coming into Workforce Commission offices to file claims. This system also has the benefit of offering the flexibility to accommodate non-English language speakers—it is currently available to speakers of Spanish, and can easily be modified to serve members of other large minority language groups in Texas, such as speakers of Chinese and Vietnamese.

In 1995, new computer systems requirements occasioned by the One-Stop initiative, the rapid consolidation of programs, and the resultant need for greater flexibility, prompted the Commission to phase out its mainframe system in favor of modular computer systems based on "scaleable platforms." In the past, TEC had made prescriptive choices about the design of information systems; now, however, because of the existence of a myriad of local information systems architectures and communications infrastructures representing large capital investments, and because of plans to design a single client database for integrated intake and case management, an "open" architectural system was designed to accommodate existing information systems. A TCPIP-based network was put in place in order to give local areas access to wage and job information, and to allow for an eventually-integrated client management system (CMS). This new "Texas Workforce Integration Network" system (TWIN) will also provide a gateway to the internet and a variety of other communication services.

However, although the technical capacity for sophisticated MIS exists in Texas, development of common application and eligibility systems and systems for integrated assessment and case management—all key elements of the state's original One-Stop proposal—has been delayed due to a variety of obstacles. Under competitive bidding arrangements for information systems, different agencies formed partnerships with different computer and information companies. Because of this competition, respondents noted that state One-Stop partner agencies were less likely to collaborate in building integrated systems. After a series of discussions involving the respective legal departments of various state agencies, for example, no consensus had been reached on standards for common intake and eligibility, let alone for integrated assessment and case management.

All respondents agreed that there were substantive issues of confidentiality, particularly in a One-Stop environment where non-governmental employees might be able to gain access to confidential information on individuals or employers. In order to deal with these potential problems, adequate training in the ethical issues related to confidentiality and clients' rights would be required, and proper sanctions would have to be in place when those ethics were violated. Respondents, however, see the current debate on confidentiality as more a legal and political problem than a technical one, suggesting that a variety of "firewalls" and access codes could be a part of a system-level endeavor to safeguard confidentiality. Respondents stressed, however, that although *state-level* efforts have been delayed, various *locally initiated efforts* at the level of either regional "networks" of One-Stops or individual Career Centers have progressed, and have often outpaced state MIS development efforts. Several local sites, for example, have developed their own common intake and eligibility procedures, and several are in the process of linking these information systems through wide area networks.

Marketing

Until fairly recently, local sites have had the major responsibility for their developing their own marketing plans, with the state acting in a supportive role. By providing local areas with information and prototypes used in marketing campaigns in a variety of locations throughout the state and nation, the state used a "tool kit" approach to helping local sites with marketing.

More recently, the state has been involved in directly promoting the One-Stop concept. At the time of the evaluation visit, state-level marketing efforts were tied to planning for a large and well publicized conference which was to take place in Dallas at the end of May, 1996. The conference was to have the dual purpose of introducing the new Workforce Commission and promoting the state's vision of One-Stop Career Centers to the larger public. Central to One-Stop marketing efforts was the establishment of a "common identity" for Career Centers throughout the state. It was expected that the upcoming conference would generate considerable media publicity in the form of newspaper, television, and radio commentaries.

Internal marketing efforts were to include a "simulated career center" in which agency partners would showcase their vision of a One-Stop Center in operation, intended to help conferees understand how a non-program-based case management system serving "multiple target populations" was intended to function. Live interactive tours of the office were being planned throughout of the conference. Another marketing effort tied to the conference involved displays of children's artwork related to career goals.

Longer-term goals of the marketing team within the Workforce Commission's Office of Public Information and Media included the development of a *cohesive identity* for the statewide One-Stop system. In this respect, the team faced several challenges. First, it was recognized that One-Stop Centers in the state varied greatly in their institutional histories (e.g., the configuration of "lead" partners and the degree of participation by partner agencies and community organizations). Second, "buy-in" of top Workforce Commission leadership on a comprehensive marketing plan was necessary, but this process had met with delays during reorganization, because its leadership was still in the process of establishing priorities and delineating various roles and responsibilities within the new organization. As a result of these delays, regional One-Stop systems and local Centers were not waiting for the state to introduce marketing plans, and were independently pursuing a variety of local marketing strategies.

Therefore, much of the state's concern had to do with the *timing* of their marketing efforts, and how marketing efforts would be accepted by local sites. Local sites had come up with a variety of names for their centers, and while many had "Career Center" in their names, others did not. In many cases, local areas had invested considerable time and money in their own marketing efforts, and part of the question for state marketing personnel was "how to get the horses back in the corral." If the state were to take a strong lead in building a cohesive identity for One-Stop, there was concern that they would be faced with a "hard sell to get some sites to drop their local identities."

As a part of their marketing efforts, a new logo had been designed with the designation "Texas Career Centers," and was to be used on state publicity materials as of June 1996. Local sites which had been certified as One-Stop Centers could place logo decals on their front doors, and use it as a part of their signage. It was suggested that use of the new logo by Career Centers would be similar to a "Good Housekeeping seal of approval," and would imply that centers displaying the logo would have services meeting state standards. Agreement on a standardized name for One-Stops throughout the state had some other important real-life implications for customers. For example, in light of the high degree of labor mobility in Texas, a cohesive identity and a standard name would help individuals to easily locate these "Career Centers" when coming to a new area.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The state of Texas has a highly ambitious One-Stop vision that emphasizes the use of a variety self-service electronic technologies to complement group services and case management. In designing its One-Stop system, the state has emphasized a flexible approach suitable for a large state characterized by diversity and a desire for local autonomy. At the same time, the state has maintained its commitment to providing adequate levels of technical assistance and support for local implementation areas. The experience of building a state-level inter-agency team prior to One-Stop implementation has facilitated the process of establishing local Career Centers. This emphasis on inter-agency coordination, and the obstacles involved with such coordination, has given the state's One-Stop team a deep understanding of the issues that arise at local levels, and of the means to facilitate team building.

The Texas approach to One-Stop design and implementation is characterized by several features, including: (1) strong state leadership to create a consolidated workforce development system; (2) recognition of the importance of local variations in the organization, design, and delivery of services; (3) an organizational structure that emphasizes participation in planning and governance at both the state and local levels; (4) a vision of tiered services; (5) the development of relevant and useful indicators of system-wide performance including customer needs assessment and measures of customer satisfaction; and (6) a continuing emphasis on improving a well-developed technological infrastructure.

SOICC has been a major force in providing many of the information-related tools which are a key component of the state's vision of emphasizing an "inverted pyramid" of services, in which the largest proportion of customers will have convenient access to a variety of self-service options. In particular, SOICC has developed an impressive array of LMI modules, with many different applications geared to a variety of audiences. The state One-Stop team has also developed a thoughtful "benchmarking" instrument, which is not only a tool for state oversight of local areas, but also promotes understanding of the types of technical assistance required by individual One-Stops. Although local reactions to benchmarking vary from place to place, many local sites find the process helpful in determining how far they have come in the process, and where further efforts are required.

The Texas One-Stop initiative has clearly proceeded rapidly in many areas. State legislation supporting the US DOL's One-Stop goals of increasing collaboration and reducing duplication of efforts has been a key factor in the degree to which One-Stop goals have been vigorously pursued in Texas.. By mandating consolidation, the state legislature has provided a foundation to an integrated workforce development system. Under the new system of local workforce development boards, local areas also have the option of increasing their autonomy and flexibility to respond to local workforce development needs.

The consolidation of a very broad range of workforce programs under one administrative entity has at the same time facilitated progress and created a series of challenges. Despite progress in many areas, the state is still in an early stage of development, having just completed its first wave of local One-Stop implementation. The state is also still struggling with several aspects of its One-Stop initiative which have yet to be resolved. Difficulties involved with introducing greater levels of competition into the system, and developing integrated systems of intake and case management across programs, are some of the examples noted in this profile.

Overall, however, the state of Texas has taken bold and comprehensive measures in furthering the One-Stop initiative. Despite the various challenges described in this profile, the state has profited from the experiences gained in inter-agency consolidation, and has attempted to share these experiences with implementation sites. In its role as facilitator, the state-level team intervenes when appropriate, but prefers to act in a support role by helping local sites during the process of rapid change brought about by the movement to develop a strong and integrated workforce system. There is a recognition that real reforms take time, and that in order for workforce development efforts to succeed in Texas, the process of establishing solid partnerships, at both the state and local levels, is essential.

APPENDIX T

ARLINGTON CAREER CENTER
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During May, 1996

ARLINGTON CAREER CENTER
ARLINGTON, TEXAS
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 9/30/96

ARLINGTON CAREER CENTER

One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Arlington is a city of approximately 300,000 within the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, located mid-way between Dallas and Fort Worth. A product of rapid urban/suburban development over the last thirty years, Arlington and its environs are still in the process of developing the physical and social services infrastructure typical of longer-established urban areas. For example, Arlington is currently the largest urban area in the U.S. without a public transportation system. The development of the Arlington Career Center as part of a county-wide One-Stop workforce development system reflects an interest among local elected officials to develop a "state-of-the-art" human services delivery system to meet the needs of Arlington residents.

Tarrant County, which contains both Fort Worth and Arlington, has a diversified manufacturing base. However, by the end of the 1980s, the economy was highly defense-dependent. As a result, the local economy was adversely affected by the down-sizing among defense industry contractors that was a national trend between 1990 and 1995. The dislocation among local defense industry workers awakened an awareness among local community leaders of the importance of making workforce development services accessible to Arlington residents. To realize locally-based workforce development services, Arlington separated itself in 1994 from the Fort Worth service delivery area (SDA) for the JTPA system and joined the Balance of Tarrant County SDA. As part of the Tarrant County SDA, Arlington was able to secure its own JTPA service center while planning for the development of One-Stop workforce development services.

The Arlington Career Center ("Center") is part of a network of seven career centers and three satellite offices developed in Tarrant County as part of the One-Stop career center initiative. Workforce development agency partners at the Arlington site have a strong recent history of collaboration that pre-dates the One-Stop Implementation Grant. As described in greater detail in the section on governance below, a local Job Training Interim Committee was initiated in 1994. Regular committee meetings over an 18 month period led to the establishment of the Arlington

Career Center as a One-Stop center based on interagency collaboration and planning and coordinated service delivery.

The stated vision of the Arlington Career is to provide a "One-Stop Career Center which serves individuals from all segments of the community with useful information and integrated services that develop job related skills and connect job seekers with employment opportunities."

Several interrelated factors have influenced the context within which the local One-Stop vision continues to emerge and take shape. Significant contextual variables include: (1) the importance of early pilot funding from the state to support the development of the local One-Stop vision; (2) strong local support from elected officials and agencies, including community block grant support for the development of a new career center facility; (3) a commitment to strong interagency communication and coordination among local workforce development and human service agencies; (4) strong leadership within the local workforce development partnership from the local JTPA administrative entity; (5) uncertainty about how the different partners will work together in a new county-wide workforce development system; and (6) the need to respond to the lack of transportation resources in the local community. Each of these factors is briefly described below.

- *Tarrant County was a recipient of one of the first five local One-Stop pilot implementation grants awarded within Texas.* As one of the first One-Stop implementation sites in the state, the Center has had time to develop many of the key aspects of its One-Stop vision.
- *The Center has profited from strong local political and community support.* In response to a 1992 United Way study that identified unemployment, underemployment, and skills deficits among adults in the Arlington community, support emerged for enhanced workforce development services. In 1993, a consensus was reached among political leaders and service providers that individuals and businesses would benefit from a career center, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were allocated for a Center. By the spring of 1995, nearly $1.3 million in CDBG funds had been earmarked for the purchase and/or renovation of a local career center facility.
- *There is a commitment to inter-agency coordination and communication throughout the county.* There is a history of inter-agency coordination in Arlington and a continuing interest among partners in the One-Stop project to link various social services and workforce development efforts.

- *The Center is an example of a JTPA-led program working in close partnership with the local Texas Workforce Commission offices to encourage a broad interagency partnership at the Center.* The Center's vision has been to include as many partners as feasible into the activities of the Center, including not only the operators of the mandated programs (e.g., JTPA, ES), but also community based organizations, local training providers and social service agencies. This continuing drive to promote wide partnership at the Center builds on County experiences of inter-agency coordination and communication, which began even before the One-Stop initiative.
- *The dynamic context within which One-Stop is emerging offers many challenges.* These include the relatively recent nature of workforce development services based in the Arlington community, uncertainty about which agencies will continue to provide what types of services, and difficulties to-date in finding a site large enough to accommodate a wide array of partners.
- *The lack of public transportation in Arlington has provided the impetus for a local network model for the provision of workforce development services.* Lack of public transportation continues to be a barrier for those without cars who need to access workforce development services. In light of this, emphasis has been placed on establishing a network of Centers, ranging from full service Career Centers such as the one in described in this profile, to smaller satellite locations offering a more limited array of services.

As a result of the interaction of multiple factors, the Arlington Career Center has developed a One-Stop Center that builds on partial, rather than full, co-location of interagency partner services. Using the existing JTPA service system as the foundation for on-site Center staff and services, the Arlington Career Center has developed a One-Stop approach that involves of a wide range of interagency partners in planning and providing universal customer services through a variety of on-site, "on-call," and closely coordinated staffing arrangements and service offerings.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Beginning in the summer of 1994, a 22-member Job Training Interim Committee, representing a broad range of workforce development and social service agencies, began meeting on a regular basis. The purpose of these meetings was to explore options for facilitating co-location among partner agencies, sharing key information about agency programs and plans, and developing integrated services. Supported by key staff from the Arlington Human Service Planner's office, the local JTPA administrative entity, and the local Texas Employment Commission office, the planning process culminated in the establishment of the Arlington Job Training Center at its present location in November 1994.

After the Arlington Job Training Center was established as a One-Stop Career Center, governance functions were assumed by a "Site-Based Management Committee," which is currently chaired by the Arlington Center site manager. This committee, comprised of 24 committee members and fifteen ex-officio members, includes broad representation from on-site service providers, and other agencies participating in local One-Stop planning and policy development. It includes a number of individuals who were involved in the initial development of the local One-Stop career center concept.

Simultaneously with the planning and initiation of the Arlington Career Center as a One-Stop center, the county has been preparing for a county-wide transformation of the administration and oversight of workforce development services. Key changes include the consolidation of two Private Industry Councils (one for Fort Worth and one for the Balance of Tarrant County) into a single Workforce Development Board (WDB), which was to have responsibility for county-wide planning, monitoring, and evaluation of workforce development services, including ES, JTPA, school-to-work, welfare-to-work, and adult basic education programs. Each of the old Private Industry Councils held what were expected to be their final meetings in July 1996. All of the members of the WDB have been appointed and "transition" meetings have been held in anticipation of state certification of the new WDB, which was expected to occur by mid-August 1996.

The relationships between the county Workforce Development Board and local career centers had not yet been fully developed at the time of the site visit. However, the broad outlines of their future relationships are clear. State legislation establishing

WDBs call for a separation of planning, evaluation, grants administration, and oversight functions from the delivery of services. Over time, the agencies operating local One-Stop centers will be selected and funded by and receive their policy guidance and oversight from the county WDB.

The key agency partners involved in the Arlington Career Center are described below, with a brief description of the services each provider at the Center:

- *Tarrant County Employment Network (TCEN).* Prior to the organizational changes associated with initiation of the One-Stop system in Tarrant County, TCEN was the JTPA administrative entity for the Balance of Tarrant County (excluding Fort Worth and three small adjacent cities). TCEN is viewed as the "lead operating agency" for the Arlington Career Center and is also responsible for operating another Tarrant County Career Center. TCEN was also the One-Stop Implementation Grant recipient for Tarrant County during the first and second grant years. The Program Manager for the Arlington Career Center is a TCEN employee. She also currently serves as the chair of the interagency Site-Based Management Committee that oversees Center operations. This position is expected to rotate among partners.
- *Texas Employment Commission/Texas Workforce Commission (TEC/TWC).*[1] An active partner in the current Center operations, TWC staff participate in the provision of Center services, including employment services, individualized job referrals, veterans assistance, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) information, unemployment insurance applications, and labor market information. As of May 1, 1996, a full-time JOBS counselor had been stationed at the Center to assist in the transition from welfare to employment. In addition to TWC staff stationed at the Center, additional TWC staff are "on-call" from their office located a block from the Center, are routinely contacted by Center staff, and will walk to the Center to meet customers.
- *Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC).* TRC is co-located in the One-Stop Center, and their offices occupy about one-third of Center space.

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[1] Texas House Bill 1863, which became effective on September 1, 1995, mandated the integration of over twenty workforce development programs from a variety of agencies into a newly created Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). With the exception of the Texas Employment Commission (TEC) which was fully subsumed under the TWC, all of the other agencies continue to exist, losing only authority over the various workforce related programs merged into TWC. By March, 1996, JTPA and the Texas Department of Commerce's workforce division had completed the merger under TWC, and the Department of Human Service's JOBS programs and Food Stamp Employment and Training will have moved by June 1, 1996. Former TEC offices are referred to throughout this profile as TWC offices.

TRC provides employment and training services for persons with disabilities, including assessment, case management, job training, and placement services.

- *Tarrant County Junior College (TCJC).* TCJC offers adult basic education classes at the Center, and also contributes to the operation of an on-site "Learning Center." TCJC also maintains an on-site presence for a satellite of their *Small Business Development Center,* which provides information to persons seeking to start or expand business.
- *Goodwill Industries.* Goodwill is another key partner in One-Stop planning. Although the Goodwill Rehabilitation Program staff are not currently co-located at the Center, the organization has entered into serious discussions about jointly purchasing a future site with other current partners. Goodwill currently offers on-site computer and clerical training at the Center.
- *Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD).* FWISD is a member of the Site-Based Management Committee and offers on-site evening classes in three levels of English as a Second Language (ESL).
- *Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP).* The local operator of this program is a member of the Site-Based Management Committee. Agency staff are stationed at the Center twice a week for the provision of its Older Worker Program and other services for older individuals.
- *Tarrant County Human Services (TCHS)* sends a representative to the Center on a visiting basis (generally once a week) to provide emergency grants and administer General Assistance (GA) programs.

Other agencies and individuals participate on the Site-Based Management Committee, but do not provide on-site services. A partial list includes:

- *Arlington Independent School District (AISD).* AISD currently manages a JTPA contract with *Venture Alternative Senior High* which tries to get out-of-school youth back into the school system, and together with groups such as *Arlington Youth Services,* and the *Boys and Girls Club of Arlington* is active in school-to-work programs.
- *Arlington Human Service Planners (AHSP).* AHSP is the joint social service planning arm of United Way and the city of Arlington.
- *University of Texas Arlington's Division of Continuing Education.*
- *Private sector representation.* Several private sector representatives provide strategic planning input to the Site-Based Management Committee.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Several formal mechanisms for communication are in place to facilitate communication between and among local One-Stop partners. Some of these are specifically focused on the Arlington Career Center, while others are broader in scope and encompass county-wide efforts in social services and workforce development. Center based communication and coordination mechanisms are described below.

- *The development of a wide-area network with the capacity to support electronic communication* (e.g., e-mail) within the Arlington Center and between Center staff and partner agencies and other network sites, is a high priority and is being addressed as part of the development of the technology infrastructure for local One-Stop operations.
- *The Arlington Site-Based Management Committee* meets on a regular basis to coordinate Center activities, share information on service provision, and establish long-range planning goals for the Center. In addition to full committee meetings, there are also two active subcommittees on *employer services* and *customer satisfaction*.
- *Center-Based Work Groups,* which are teams of front-line staff, meet regularly to discuss current service practices across partner agencies and opportunities for improved coordination or integration of services. These include groups on *customer service, assessment, information services, and employer services.* Two other groups, *scholarship management* and *academic services,* provide information on educational opportunities related to career development. Work groups provide regular updates on their activities at staff meetings.

In addition, several of the One-Stop partner agencies participate in other forums that deal with issues related to broader social service objectives. These include:

- The *Arlington Human Service Planners*, the planning group for social service provision, which seeks to coordinate city services and non-governmental community based organizations.
- *Social Services Providers Network,* a network of managers and front line staff in government and community-based social service agencies.
- *Emergency Assistance of Tarrant County*, an inter-agency forum for providers of emergency assistance.

Active participation by a wide range of agencies is viewed as one of the strengths of the Arlington Center. However, as might be expected in a situation with many active partner agencies, communication and coordination was described as sometimes "unwieldy." Challenges include the fact that some individuals or agencies "drop in and out" of active participation because of the large time commitment involved in participation in multiple partnership initiatives. In spite of the challenges involved in coordinating meetings among the diverse membership of the Committee, most of the regular participants saw these scheduled meetings as extremely valuable. Members commented that the Committee provided an important opportunity for service providers to "network" and share information about the array of workforce development programs available at the Center and other sites throughout the county. Respondents said the Committee also allowed members to plan their activities with a view toward the total needs of the community and to reduce interagency duplication of effort.

Communication between local One-Stop actors and the members of the state's One-Stop Implementation Team was described as taking place on an "as-needed" basis when questions arose. The state's approach to communication was viewed as emphasizing "top-down" communication, from state staff to *top management staff* from the Center and other participating agencies. Although several key respondents indicated that they would appreciate more regular communication with the state, it was understood that the state One-Stop Team was busy with the transitions mandated by TWC and with preparation for a major conference scheduled for the end of May 1996. The conference was intended to publicize the new Texas Workforce Commission and promote the One-Stop concept through an exhibition of a functioning "model One-Stop Center."

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

First year Implementation Grant funding for One-Stop implementation throughout the Tarrant County system funding totaled $307,000, and second year funding is expected to be $150,000. During the transition to a local Workforce Development Board, The Tarrant County Employment Network (TCEN) was designated as the fiscal agent to receive Implementation Grant funds. These funds have been used for several purposes, including:

- The staffing of interim positions to develop integrated One-Stop processes and procedures, and to modify MIS systems for the county-wide network.
- The purchase of equipment and materials, such as software and videos, that would be used by a universal customer base and the various partners at One-Stop Career Centers.

Individuals hired for the countywide staff positions funded with the implementation grant have been instrumental in developing management information system linkages between TCEN and other partner agencies and collaborating organizations. Activities carried out by these staff have included configuring computers and networks and installing networking equipment and lines throughout the county Career Center system. These activities will help support the management functions of the newly formed county Workforce Development Board by making it possible to provide access to common client databases, share information across partner agencies, and make the network vision a reality.

In terms of overall Center operations, the integration of multiple funding streams for the provision of universal and integrated services was described as an "operational and conceptual challenge." At the time of the site visit, there were no formal cost-sharing agreements among Center partners. Even the arrangements for sharing of the physical space at the Arlington Career Center are informal. With the exception of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, which occupies nearly one-third of the Center facility and houses its entire staff at the Center, none of the partner agencies pays TCEN (the primary lease holder) for space occupied at the Center.

Partners at the Arlington Career Center currently operate shared functions by sharing resources mainly through in-kind contributions of staff and equipment. The Texas Workforce Commission and the Tarrant County Employment Network, for example, have a formal contractual arrangements to maintain staff at the other's service sites. Tarrant County Junior College has donated furniture and software used in the study room, classroom, conference room, and reception and office areas of the Arlington Career Center's Learning Center. Goodwill Industries provides instructors for its "quick computer classes" provided at the Center. Four to five slots are reserved in these classes for JTPA participants at no charge (the classes are available to the general public for on a fee-for-service basis) in exchange for space at the Center. Several other partners, including the Senior Community Services Employment Program have contributed publications and other reference materials to the Center's library.

Despite the fact that these arrangements have worked fairly well to date, TCEN's fiscal manager indicated the desire to develop formalized cost-sharing agreements, as well as more detailed agreements specifying other non-financial responsibilities and expected benefits among partners at the Center. Center staff are also actively researching possibilities of charging fees for some services both to businesses and individuals, and are in the process of taking stock of both available resources and Center capabilities. In the opinion of several respondents, local One-Stop centers have the potential to generate their own funds through fee-for-service arrangements, since they are regarded as offering high quality workshops and training. This would enable the Center to expand its business service offerings and make some individual services available to individuals who are not eligible under existing categorical programs.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

The Arlington Career Center came about as the result of a broad based interagency initiative with strong local support and funding. The Arlington Center traces its history to a 1992 study conducted by United Way which identified unemployment, underemployment, and skills deficits among Arlington adults. In response to this study, local officials and community leaders formed a multi-agency team in the summer of 1993, with the goal of developing plans for a locally-based integrated workforce development system. Events moved quickly. By the spring of 1994, Arlington had separated from the Fort Worth SDA, joined the Balance of Tarrant County SDA, and secured PIC approval for plans to develop a career center for the delivery of JTPA services in the city of Arlington. The city government earmarked a $200,000 community development block grant (CDBG) for the creation of a Job Training Center in Arlington.

The One-Stop concept has continued to receive strong local political support from the office of the mayor and from the county judge, both key positions. In the spring of 1995, the city set aside an additional sum of over $1 million in CDBG funds for the purchase and/or renovation of a career center facility. When, in November 1995, the Tarrant County Employment Network chose a building that had been vacant for a decade and had been only recently renovated as the site for the new Arlington Career Center, it was hoped that several additional workforce development partners involved in career center planning would be able to locate their own offices in the same complex. However, several of the non-profit organizations which had originally hoped to locate in the same building with the Center were not able to afford rents in the building. Efforts to purchase the building on behalf of several partners were not successful.

Because the physical facility selected for the Arlington Career Center did not lead to full co-location of multiple agency partners, the One-Stop model that has evolved draws on the combined features of "co-location" and "no-wrong-door" approaches. The service approach emphasizes sharing staff across multiple agencies and local service sites, including part-time and full-time out-stationing of staff from a variety of partner agencies at the Arlington Career Center. Although many agency partners are represented at the Center, the Center has not had to deal with the "culture clash" that is likely to arise from full co-location of large programs with different histories, as has occurred in other One Stop Centers throughout the country that have brought full ES/UI and JTPA operations together at one site.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Themes

Universal Access

Although the Arlington Career Center has grown out of a JTPA-funded service delivery system, the partners at the Arlington Center have developed a service delivery strategy to reach a universal population. Through the implementation of the concept of different tiers of service (e.g., self-service; group services, such as workshops; and intensive individual services) self-service options are used to accommodate an increased volume of individual customers, including individuals from the general public not eligible for specific categorical programs. To enhance the Center's visibility to a broad customer base, partners in the Center use regular meetings and forums involving Center partners and other agencies, as well as the preparation and distribution of flyers and information packets on Center workshops and services.

The Center also provides extended hours of service three evenings a week, in order to reach working and under-employed persons looking for opportunities to upgrade skills or change careers, as well as to offer increased customer access to Center-based classes in ESL and computer instruction. As described in a later section under core services, most universal services at the Center are accessed through a "Resource Room" and a "Career Library." The Resource Room, which offers access to the Job Bank, computers, a phone bank, and fax machines, is one of the most popular services offered at the center.

Customer Choice

The Tarrant County network of full-service and satellite career centers is designed to offer county residents a choice of where to access workforce development services. Within the Arlington Career Center, customers are able to access to a wide variety of services.

Currently, the Resource Room and Career Library offer the services available to the general public. Using these self-service options, for example, individuals can research on-line job listings, call job-line numbers, and access labor market information. They can also practice interviewing skills using interactive computer software, use typing and other office software tutorials, locate information on other community resources, and obtain information about scholarships and career training.

Orientation and information sessions let customers know what other services are available. All customers may register for job search assistance and information about UI benefits, or attend a Job Forum, a weekly networking and support group, to which guest speakers, including area employers, are invited to speak.

Individuals eligible for categorical programs such as JTPA, JOBS, TAA, or other services targeted to youth, veterans, older workers, or other target groups are informed about their service options.

Integrated Services

The partners in the Tarrant County Career Center network have adopted a flexible network approach to the provision of One-Stop services, with each of the seven full-service Career Centers in the County offering a different configuration of co-located and "no wrong door" linkages to comprehensive services for Center customers.

Because the facility selected for the Arlington Career Center did not lead to the degree of co-location originally envisioned, service integration among Center partners who are not co-located is expressed through close coordination of activities among partners, resulting in personalized services to Center customers. For example, if an individual Center customer who is a veteran indicates an interest in career or placement counseling, a Veterans' Services representative from the nearby TWC office is "on call" and will come to the Center to meet with the individual. In general, physical proximity allows for frequent face-to-face and telephone contact between staff of the Arlington Center and nearby TWC staff, and for coordination of services on behalf of individual customers. Although some respondents indicated that there would have been advantages to a greater degree of co-location, others felt that a smaller Center with fewer on-site staff has made it easier to create a "customer-friendly" office, in contrast to a larger-scale facility, which might have had a more bureaucratic atmosphere.

Among staff co-housed at the Arlington Center, while cross-training among staff from different agencies is still in an early stage, there are plans to cross-train staff to facilitate integration of core services and case management functions. As the lead agency operating the Arlington Career Center, TCEN is committed to providing "seamless services" to customers by promoting coordination among on-site service providers. All staff at the Arlington Center, no matter what agency they work for, are identified by their name badges as "Arlington Career Center" staff. Many of the common functions within the Center, including customer reception, orientation, and intake have been integrated across all in-house staff. The Center appears to have achieved the goal of "seamless" services from the customer perspective, as indicated by the fact that Center customers who participated in focus groups during the site visit were unaware that Center staff were employees of a number of different agencies.

While the Center is faced with many internal management challenges around issues of cost-sharing, cost-accounting, and assigning credit for customer outcomes, there is a clear commitment to ensure that these questions do not become their customers' problems.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based Measures

Respondents expressed an interest in measuring both the short- and long-term impacts of the One-Stop system. They also felt that accountability issues are changing as part of the transition from an employment and training system that provides personal assistance to individuals and is held accountable for individual placement outcomes, to a system in which many customers may find their own jobs through access to unsuppressed job listings available through electronic bulletin boards accessed at a distance.

Under such conditions, measurement of consumer satisfaction is increasing in importance. A local customer satisfaction team was established to assess individual and employer customer feedback. The team draws on assessment techniques recommended by sources such as the technical assistance guides prepared as part of the ES "Simply Better" initiative. As a result of team efforts, customers using the Center are currently asked to complete a form with suggestions, comments, or complaints. Completed forms are posted in the Resource Room and customer feedback is regularly reported to staff.

Respondents indicated that it is difficult, under the rapidly changing environment prompted by One-Stop, to assign "credit" to any agency for outcomes, as is currently required by a variety of program-specific performance and accountability measures, particularly since several partner agencies often work with the same customer. Respondent stated that within a One-Stop environment, performance measurements should capture system-wide benefits. Center staff expressed frustration that program-specific performance measures have not kept pace with the rapid changes brought about by the initiation of One-Stop centers.

Physical Facilities

The design of a One-Stop facility has been a major issue for the Arlington Career Center. It was originally envisioned that a common facility would be found to accommodate all of the original partners involved in the design of the Center. In November 1994, TCEN moved into the current Center location. The facility is two blocks from an office of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and a half-mile from the Arlington Human Services Complex. For a variety of reasons, other partners were not able to locate in the same complex. Although the Center has adapted to the lack of full co-location at the current facility, the search continues for another location that would permit additional partners to locate with TCEN in a shared "workforce development campus."

At the present Center location, the main customer entrance leads into an attractive atrium area of the two-story brick office building. A stairway leading to the second floor divides the ground floor into two halves. Turning right from the atrium area, customers enter a small welcome area, where they are greeted by a receptionist. Staff at the Center indicated that having a reception area was a small thing with a big impact, and was influenced by the desire to achieve a "private sector" image. According to one respondent, "[because we have a reception area] there is no bullpen approach—keeping people penned up while waiting for us to call them. Having this space, the receptionist is free to interact with clients."

Immediately behind the reception area is a Career Library, which has an information desk staffed by a full-time Center employee. Customers can reach the Resource Room either through the Career Library, or by walking down the main corridor. (Services available in the Resource Room and Career Library are described under core services, below.) The remaining portion of the ground floor is occupied by a Learning Center which is used for adult basic education classes and computer courses and by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. Second floor office space has been leased to private businesses. The exterior of the building is well maintained; there are landscaped areas with recently planted bushes, and there is adequate customer and staff parking on the side and to the rear of the building.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

Although the local Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC) office is the only other agency that is fully co-located with TCEN at the Arlington Career Center, a number of other agencies house some staff on a full-time or part-time basis at the Center. In a parallel fashion, some TCEN staff are outstationed at the TWC offices in Arlington and at Bedford (about fifteen miles from Arlington) to support the One-Stop delivery of JTPA-funded services at these career centers.

TWC locates some of its full time staff at the Center, so that customers can apply for unemployment benefits and, since May 1996, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) Assistance, without leaving the Center. Also as of May 1996, a full-time JOBS counselor at the Center to assist Center customers who are eligible for, or currently participating in both JOBS and JTPA services.

Other examples of on-site Center staffing arrangements involve Goodwill Industries and Tarrant County Junior College. TCJC's community service arm reaches hard-to-serve populations through its on-site adult basic education and GED preparation classes. TCJC maintains a teacher's aide at the Career Center's Learning Center. ABE/GED classes offered at the Center are open to the general public. In exchange for classroom space at the Center, TCJC reserves a certain number of slots in each class for JTPA customers. Goodwill's Rehabilitation Program currently provides instructors for on-site computer and clerical training programs. These classes are available to the general public on a fee-for-service basis. In exchange for access to classroom space at the Learning Center, Goodwill allocates an average of four of ten slots in each course free of charge to JTPA customers.

Capacity Building

Capacity building efforts for Center staff include both state-directed and locally-initiated efforts. Because of the large geographical size of the state and limitations on travel budgets, only management staff from the Center and its partner agencies have been able to attend state-initiated staff training offered in other locations. In a few cases, often in tandem with bi-annual "benchmarking" visits, state One-Stop teams and

SOICC representatives have traveled to Arlington to provide technical assistance and training.

Despite the relative lack of state-initiated training, capacity building efforts within the Center do not appear to have suffered. Locally-initiated training sessions have been provided to Center staff and there are plans to hire outside consultants to conduct additional staff training workshops. Limited cross-training has been provided to Center staff on the specific content of employer services, unemployment insurance benefits, and JTPA programs, and on other partner agency programs. In addition, site-based work groups, discussed earlier, have also been a source of capacity building at the Center. Each of these groups is charged with preparing updates on their work on specific topics (assessment, customer service, information services, employer services, academic services, and scholarship management) for presentation to Center staff. Through these activities, front-line staff have pooled their knowledge and expertise in specific areas.

Capacity building efforts at the Center have not had to respond to organizational conflict or staff trauma as a result of merging the staff from multiple agency cultures. Although many partners are represented at the Center, the Center does not house the full staffs of several major programs (e.g. ES/UI and JTPA) in one location. Perhaps as a result, the Center has not had to adjust to organizational change as at some One-Stop centers nationwide. Rather, the staff at the Arlington Career Center have the luxury of being able to absorb a relatively small number of representatives from many partner agencies into a predominantly JTPA-driven organizational culture.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The state of Texas, through TWC, has been instrumental in the design of One-Stop management information systems. They have assisted local sites, including the Arlington Center, to establish computer protocols for accessing a variety of state databases. However, the development of integrated intake, assessment, and case management tools for use at the local level has been delayed as a result of competition among the partner state agencies and their respective private sector partners for contracts to develop a statewide MIS. Legal issues about confidentiality have also been a source of disagreement among state agency partners. Because of these difficulties at the state level, TCEN's MIS staff have been given the "green light" to move ahead with their own local integrated systems. Locally initiated efforts have progressed rapidly, and in some areas, such as integrated intake, have outpaced state MIS development efforts.

The objectives for the management of information systems at the Arlington Center are to design and implement an open computer system conforming to industry standards that connects to the MIS systems of all agencies that want to be partners in the One-Stop system. In mid-1995, partner agencies formed an information technology group at the Resource Connection, a second One-Stop site in Fort Worth. This group later began the joint development of an integrated MIS system at the Resource Connection which has become the networking hub of a county-wide automated intake and case management system.

During the site visit, respondents described a high level of cooperation, particularly among the 'big players," JTPA and TWC, in working toward such a system. Although not all elements of such a system are currently in place, rapid progress is being made to reach this goal. As of June 1996, the *information technology* work group was holding weekly meetings with the technical and operations staff of One-Stop partner agencies and other local agencies participating in the development of a shared integrated management information system. During a recent meeting, each agency presented its most recent information requirements for intake and case management, and a preliminary decision was made to purchase "off the shelf" intake and "pre-assessment" modules developed by DSI, a private software vendor. This is seen as an interim solution to implementing integrated intake and assessment, pending development of an integrated system at the state level.

The Center has already developed and implemented an automated system to track customer use of the Center and its services. In terms of the ability to share client-level information among partner agencies, rapid progress is also being made. During the evaluation site visit in May 1996, TWC staff were still obliged to telephone the Center for information about JTPA clients. Since that time, more TWC offices have become networked, and now have the capability to access shared databases. It is anticipated that most of the agencies involved in the information technology committee will soon be linked through a wide area network (WAN).

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

The state of Texas has also been instrumental in developing enhanced labor market information for improved technology-based products for One-Stop customers.

The Arlington Center has access to the full array of labor market information and related information technology from the Texas State Occupational Information & Coordinating Committee (SOICC).[2] These include two statewide LMI systems, Texas "Rescue"—a case management tool originally intended for dislocated workers and to emphasize skills transfer—and Texas CARES (the Career Alternatives Resource Evaluation System)—a user-friendly comprehensive career information delivery system oriented to career exploration for people with little work experience.

These LMI products as well as Job Express, TWC's job listing service, are available to Center customers at 12 computer terminals located in the Center's Resource Room. Job listings can also be accessed from remote home or business locations using a PC with a modem by connecting to a bulletin board service (BBS). As a result of remote dial-in access to TWC's automated job listings, there has been a rapid expansion in the number of customers using this service. Job Express *kiosks* are also located in several locations throughout Arlington in areas with high pedestrian traffic such as malls and discount stores.

At the time of the evaluation site visit, Internet access via the computers at the Center was a priority project, and has since been completed. As a result, the Center has experienced a rapidly increasing demand for access to computers and plans to expand the number of computer terminals available at the Center.

Marketing

Marketing One-Stop career centers is viewed as the responsibility of the workforce development *system*, including the county network and the state, rather than of individual career centers. However, TCEN has invested in its own marketing efforts in the area of business services, and has prepared and distributed a professionally-designed color brochure describing its services to businesses. In addition, to fulfill its local outreach and marketing needs, local partners have prepared an orientation packet that describes individual, group, and self-services offered at Career Centers. Individual flyers from the orientation packet are also distributed to partner agencies.

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[2] SOICC has responsibility for technology and information related to occupational information for five state-mandated partners including Texas Education Agency (TEA), JTPA, the Department of Economic Development, Department of Rehabilitation, and TEC.

Although the Center has not paid for general advertising, the programs offered at the Center have received press coverage in local papers, and specific events sponsored by Center partners, such as quarterly job fairs, are well publicized. Open houses, which Center staff have also found to be effective in publicizing Center activities, are held periodically. For example, Center staff were planning with the local Chamber of Commerce for a Chamber-sponsored open house at the Center late summer 1996.

The Center also relies heavily on linkages with other agencies to publicize its services, and respondents indicated that marketing efforts have increased since the implementation of the One-Stop concept.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

The Center has drawn on the concept of an *inverted pyramid* of service delivery. Because of continuing reductions in funds for social and career development services, some respondents used the metaphor of medical triage, or "treating the severely wounded first," as central to the implementation of multiple tiers of service. In their view, One-Stop is much more than a *technological* revolution, but it was becoming clearer that because of diminishing resources, people have to do more for themselves. Respondents indicated that an important function of staff at One-Stop centers is increasingly teaching people how to use available resources. At the same time, there is an appreciation among Center staff that customers are in different positions on a learning curve. The challenge of designing and implementing services in a One-Stop setting is to offer universal services while continuing to meet the needs of those requiring more individualized services, through a thoughtful tailoring of the mix of services to meet the needs of their customer base.

In the hierarchy of services provided by a variety of programs and agencies, the first tier of "core services" include those available to the general public at no cost. The Resource Room and Career Library are the location of most core services within the Arlington Career Center. Core services appear to be highly valued by Center customers. For example, a large majority of customers surveyed during the first quarter of 1996 indicated that they had come that day to use the Resource Room and Career Library. Services available through the Resource Room/Career Library include:

- Assistance with learning to use résumé writing software

- Access to free fax and telephones for contacting employers
- On-line job listings through the state's Job Express and America's Job Bank
- On-line labor market information
- Interactive computer programs for enhancing interviewing skills
- Information on other community resources
- Information on scholarships and career training
- A variety of computer tutorials for typing and using software

The Career Library also contains written reference materials on companies, resume writing and job search strategies, as well as newspapers and periodicals containing job listings. The Career Library has a staffed information desk. During a focus group conducted as part of the evaluation visit, several customers commended the individual staffing the information desk for her knowledge about the materials in the room and the quality of professional assistance provided.

The Center also offers all customers information about the range of programs and services offered by Center partners and a preliminary or final determination of eligibility for these programs. Center staff (either TCEN staff or outstationed staff from other agencies) can register customers with TWC for employment services, take UI applications, and offer customers access to programs and services available from JTPA, JOBS services for AFDC recipients, Food Stamp Employment and Training Services, Veterans' Employment and Training Services, Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits, and Older Worker Programs. Because the Texas Rehabilitation Commission has its offices in the same facility, customers with disabilities can be easily referred there for services.

Additional services housed at the Center, some of which are available to the general public at no cost, include ABE, GED, and ESL classes offered through the on-site Learning Center by staff from the Tarrant County Junior College and the Fort Worth Independent School District. Computer training classes offered by Goodwill at the Center are available to the general public on a fee basis.

The second and third tiers of service available through the Center include group workshops and the provision of individualized assessment, career counseling, and training supports. Because the Arlington Career Center originated as a JTPA-funded facility and JTPA still pays for the majority of staff stationed at the Center, eligibility for JTPA is still currently a requirement for access to many of the second and third tier Center services provided at the Center.

"Second-tier" services consist of group workshops. The Center offers a series of highly-regarded subject-specific modular workshops of about two hours duration on such subjects as job hunting techniques, effective telephone contact, applications, resumes, interviewing skills and practice interviews. These workshops were originally designed to be part of a comprehensive menu of services available to JTPA participants as part of an individual education, training, or reemployment plan. JTPA-eligible individuals who are participating the services provided by another agency (e.g., JOBS or FSE&T) may also sign up to attend workshops at the Center. At the present time, some non-JTPA eligible customers are offered access to these workshops on a space available basis. Center staff are considering how to develop other funding streams, including the possibility of fee-for-service arrangements, to make group workshops available to the general public.

Third-tier services available to Center customers include the specialized services funded under specific categorical programs. For customers qualifying for these programs, services include individual assessment of basic skills, interests, and aptitudes and development of a job search or training plan. Other services provided to Center customers include tuition assistance in approved training, career interest matching, financial aid counseling, continuing individualized job search assistance, customized resume development, and a variety of support services including transportation assistance.

Services for Employer Customers

Although services for employers are not yet as well-developed as those for individuals, the Arlington Center has the potential to develop strong employer services using the same broad-based interagency collaboration, networking, and partnerships it has exhibited in the development of services for individual job seekers. An interagency Employer Services Unit within the Center has initiated contacts with small and medium-sized businesses in Arlington, using the business-oriented marketing brochure discussed above.

Core services offered to employer customers at no charge include job listings, managed by TWC staff, and access to individualized referrals from Center job developers and job brokers. Among the expanded services offered to employers in the past is customized job training. TCEN has a track record of providing customized training for large local employers. TWC and TCEN have also conducted large scale recruitment efforts for large local employers involving assessment, screening, and placement. As a result of its past successes in providing firms assistance in meeting their recruitment and customized training needs, an active center-based work group is considering how to develop fee-based specialized business services.

Related to the work of the Employer Services Unit are several entrepreneurial training programs offered on-site by Center partners. These include the *Small Business Development Center* (SBDC) and *the Electronic Commerce Resource Center* (ECRC). SBDC is a professional management counseling service operated by TCJC using funds from the Small Business Administration and the U.S. Department of Commerce. SBDC programs include one-on-one counseling to new entrepreneurs and to established businesses, and classes on subjects related to the start-up of new businesses. Links with other business related services through the SBDC include the Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center and Internal Revenue Service seminars. ECRC plans to begin a thirty hour course at the Center for small business customers. This course will focus on teaching business-related computer skills and Internet use.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

As part of the evaluation site visit, a focus group was arranged with individual customers receiving a broad range of Center services, ranging from self services to intensive services. Individual respondents were uniformly enthusiastic about the services they had received at the Center. Several respondents indicated that the loss of employment had been a traumatic experience, describing their initial reaction to the experience using terms such as "humiliated" and "stunned." Respondents indicated that they viewed the Center as a place to get their lives back together, to meet and share information about job leads with other people that were looking for work, and as a place that boosted their morale. "The whole idea of the place is to get people back to work," said one respondent. "This is the best place for someone who wants to improve their life." In general, customers believed the Center offered a significant departure from "traditional" workforce development services in terms of the level of staff support, the professional environment, and the range of available services and customer choice.

Several pointed to résumé writing, salary negotiation, and other workshops held at the Center as very informative and helpful, and crucial to their job search. Others pointed to the willingness of Center staff to assist them in using technology to do searches through job banks or to research companies on-line. One customer praised the "patient and professional attitude" of the Career Library and Resource Room staff. Another found that the Center offered him a menu of choices and opportunities: "I would go to as many workshops as I could," said one customer, "and if there were none on that day, I would still come in to use the computers and check job listings in the Resource Room."

While many of the respondents made use of self-service and group service offerings, others required more individualized attention. One of the respondents had been unemployed for one and half years during which his family lost all of their possessions except for one bed. "In the process of packing," he said, "I had to leave behind an $800 sofa that no one would buy. We had to leave behind the dishes we got on our wedding day. I hope my wife and children never have to go through that again, experience that level of poverty." After filing for bankruptcy, he enrolled in a JTPA-funded technical training program through the Center, and was able to find work as a mechanic.

To summarize, individual customers were very complimentary in their assessment of staff and programs offered at the Center. They commented on the broad mix of services available, included well-developed self-service options and group workshops related to job search and employment skills preparation. Customers that had participated in staffed services such as workshops and individualized training programs found the services valuable in increasing their morale and preparedness for the transition back to employment.

Employers

Site visitors met with a business representative who sat on both of the existing Tarrant County Private Industry Councils as well as an individual who had co-chaired the Arlington Interim Job Training Committee. Both respondents had been involved in planning for the transformation to a One-Stop center and spoke from this perspective, rather than offering a purely "employer perspective." These respondents felt that many of the area's large employers were aware of, and had used the services available from Center partners. Interviewees agreed that it would be important to involve more small employers in the activities of the Center and to publicize the kinds of employer services offered.

Some of the programs recently introduced at the Center, such as the Small Business Development Center (SBCD) were too new, according to respondents, to have produced tangible results. Respondents agreed that the mechanisms used to make services more attractive to employers, such as job brokering and customer account representatives, were now well established, and that further development of business services was only a matter of time and effort.

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN

The federal One-Stop Implementation Grant was an important catalyst in speeding up the process of coordinating workforce development services in Arlington. The grant made possible: 1) a strengthening of the coordination and communication among the many One-Stop partners both at the Center and throughout the Tarrant County system, and 2) rapid progress in linking the various information technology systems of TCEN, TWC, TDHS and other agency partners.

State-mandated integration of a myriad of workforce development programs under one administrative roof, was also clearly an important impetus for the rapid and broad-ranging changes that have come about in Tarrant County as part of the One-Stop planning and implementation process. The state has been highly influential in its clear policy support for the development of integrated local One-Stop centers, while at the same time, through the creation of local Workforce Development Boards, has encouraged a great degree of local control over local workforce development planning and resource allocation. The state has also made a large investment in information technologies, from which the Arlington Center and the broader Tarrant County network of One-Stop career centers have benefited.

Because the new WDB had not yet been certified, it was still unclear what types of changes will be implemented at the local level as the new system for local governance is established, and what impact this will have on service providers and the range of customers served at One-Stop Centers. Respondents at the Arlington Center are, however, confident in the belief that they will be able to offer a broad range of workforce related services to a diverse customer base. Because Tarrant County One-Stop planners have been proactive in establishing a broad-based collaborative effort throughout the county, and because there is continuing strong political support for workforce development efforts among local and county officials, Center staff feel that they have established a strong foundation for continued evolution of the One-Stop approach in Tarrant County.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The national One-Stop initiative has had a strong impact on the formulation of clear policy objectives and effective implementation of many of the One-Stop goals in Arlington, Texas. Key One-Stop players there consistently stress the importance of working together in broad coalitions, and view the One-Stop philosophy as a radical departure from previous ways of doing business. They counsel new One-Stop practitioners about the importance of maintaining excitement about the project, while at the same time being prepared for a multitude of difficult adjustments that require "taking a deep breath and jumping in." One-Stop offers the opportunity to work with a wide variety of people, agencies, and employers. From their perspective, participants in One-Stop initiatives must be also be willing to spend a great deal of time and effort on "internal marketing" to partners, through extensive meetings, and consensus and capacity building efforts.

Building local political and financial support for these efforts is also another important part of the equation for success. While workforce development and social service provision were not a major priority in Arlington throughout the 1980s, defense cutbacks prompted local civic leaders to reassess the need for locally-based workforce development services. As a result of the commitment of key community leaders, interagency policy forums were initiated and a consensus was established around furthering an integrated workforce development approach. Because many of these developments occurred before the One-Stop Implementation Grant was received and before the passage of state legislation mandating consolidation of workforce programs under the TWC, the local transition to One-Stop Career Centers was greatly facilitated.

APPENDIX U

LAKE JACKSON CAREER CENTER
LAKE JACKSON, TEXAS
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During May 1996

LAKE JACKSON CAREER CENTER
LAKE JACKSON, TEXAS
One-Stop Profile

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Last Revised 11/5/96

LAKE JACKSON CAREER CENTER
LAKE JACKSON, TEXAS
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Lake Jackson Career Center is one of four existing and two planned One-Stop centers in the 13-county Houston-Galveston "Gulf Coast" area of Texas. These One-Stop centers are being developed as part of the regional Gulf Coast Career Center system by an interagency regional steering committee led by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, which is the administrative entity for one of the JTPA service delivery areas in the Houston-Galveston region.

The Lake Jackson Career Center ("Center") is located in Lake Jackson, a town of 32,000 people located about an hour's drive from Houston. The Center serves all of Brazoria County, which has a population of 220,000. Although much of the county area is rural farmland, the county has a diversified economic base, with manufacturing accounting for one-quarter of all non-agricultural employment. Several major petrochemical plants are located in the county, the largest of which is owned by Dow Chemical. Despite being more affluent than many Texas counties—with a median household income about 25% above the state average—Brazoria County has experienced a steady increase in unemployment during the first half of the 1990s, from about 5% in 1990 to over 7% in 1995. Currently, unemployment has stabilized at slightly under 7%.

The Gulf Coast Career Center system was initiated in 1994 when the agencies responsible for the JTPA, ES/UI, and JOBS programs joined in a partnership to plan a regional One-Stop system in response to the state's One-Stop Implementation Grant RFP. Although it was not included in the earliest stages of the One-Stop planning process, the Lake Jackson Center was ultimately chosen by the regional planning committee as a One-Stop site because the Lake Jackson office of the Texas Employment Commission had recently co-located with the JTPA provider. Planning for One-Stop implementation in Lake Jackson began in July 1995, at about the time One-Stop implementation funding was received by the Gulf Coast regional partnership.

The regional One-Stop planning partnership has enthusiastically embraced the vision of universal customer-driven One-Stop services. The planning committee's vision for the Gulf Coast Career Centers is that they will function like *libraries*, with an emphasis on self-service access to information. At the same time, customers should be able to approach staff freely with particular questions and individual needs. Specific regional One-Stop goals include the creation of a region-wide workforce system which (1) provides convenient access to a network of information and services, (2) is evaluated on the basis of labor market outcomes, efficiency of service delivery, and customer satisfaction, and (3) offers universal access to information and services that significantly support and enhance the skills necessary for career and educational advancement.

Several key variables are influencing the context within which the Lake Jackson Career Center is developing. These include: (1) negotiations surrounding the creation of a single Workforce Development Area encompassing the city of Houston, the balance of Harris County (in which Houston is located), and the surrounding 12 counties; (2) rapid changes in the organizational structures for workforce development programs at the state and local levels; (3) substantial "downsizing" among major employers in the Lake Jackson area, relatively high unemployment rates, and an urgent need for retraining among workers dislocated by recent layoffs; and (4) a community culture that has caused staff to emphasize personal relationships in their system-building efforts. These contextual variables are briefly described below:

- *Negotiations are underway between the city of Houston and surrounding counties to create a unified "Gulf Coast Workforce Development Area."* In the interim, the city of Houston continues to maintain a JTPA delivery system that is separate from that in the surrounding counties. At the time of our visits, members of a workforce development board had not yet certified. It is expected however, that a major new organizational partner—the city of Houston's JTPA administration, "Houston Works"—will eventually join the regional One-Stop planning partnership.
- *The One-Stop approach in Texas is evolving within a context of rapid organizational change.* The merging of over twenty workforce development programs under the auspices of the Texas Workforce Commission mandated by House Bill 1863 (see Texas state profile), has resulted in short-term uncertainty about the state's blueprint for integrating workforce development services. This uncertainty was

expected to continue until the policies of the newly integrated agency were further clarified.

- *Major employers in the Lake Jackson area have been downsizing for a prolonged period and the level of skills needed for current job openings has escalated.* For example, Dow Chemical, which had formerly employed over 10,000 persons at its Lake Jackson plant, now has fewer than 5,000 employees and is continuing to reduce staffing levels, with another round of lay-offs expected in late 1996. Because of continuing layoffs by major local industries, many dislocated workers have found that their existing level of education and skills is inadequate in the changed labor market. Even many entry-level positions now require post-secondary education and/or skills certification.
- *In a rural setting such as Lake Jackson, there is a strong value placed on informal relationships and communication.* Many respondents, including Center staff and employers, emphasized the importance of personal relationships and contacts. One-Stop development has been facilitated by the existence of long-standing working relationships among Center partners and between Center staff and customers.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Using its One-Stop Implementation grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Texas awarded a series of One-Stop implementation grants to 12 local areas to "pilot" One-Stop systems. In addition, financial incentives were offered to all areas for the formation of Workforce Development Boards to oversee integrated One-Stop services. In July 1995, the Houston-Galveston Area Council, on behalf of an interagency partnership, received a One-Stop implementation grant from the state to pilot One-Stop centers in the 13-county Gulf Coast region.

Regional Governance

The regional partners that applied for a state One-Stop implementation grant included the Houston-Galveston Area Council (the administrative entity for the 12-county Gulf Coast JTPA service delivery area), the Balance of Harris County JTPA administrative entity, the Houston Regional Office of the Texas Employment Commission (TEC), and the Houston Regional Office of the Texas Department of Human Services (DHS). The Houston-Galveston Area Council acts as the grant recipient and fiscal agent for the partnership. The city of Houston had applied to the state to maintain a separate Workforce Development Area with its own board, but this request was turned down by the state. As a result, the Gulf Coast regional partnership will face the challenge of integrating the city of Houston's JTPA entities into this broad regional partnership.

After the receipt of the One-Stop implementation grant in July 1995, the regional One-Stop planning committee was expanded to include the agencies responsible for adult education and literacy services, the Title V older workers program, and vocational rehabilitation services, as well as labor and employer representatives. The expanded committee prepared a three-year plan for the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Area. Original members of the planning committee have continued to function as a steering committee for Gulf Coast One-Stop implementation.

A regional board, whose members have been appointed by each of the 13 county judges (chief elected county officials), will provide formal governance of the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Area. After the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Board is certified by the state, it will have broad-ranging responsibility for regional workforce development services, including ES, UI, JTPA, school-to-work, welfare-to-work, adult basic education, and proprietary vocational education programs. It was expected that the Board would be approved by the Texas Workforce Commission and certified by the governor by mid- to late 1996. Pending certification, the Gulf Coast Career Center system is overseen by a regional Workforce Advisory Committee and the Houston-Galveston Area Council's board of directors, which is composed of local elected officials from the thirteen counties and major cities in the region. The Area Council board currently has final responsibility for review and oversight of the regional career center system and reports on progress in implementation and performance.

Center Governance

State legislation calling for the creation of regional workforce development boards requires that planning, evaluation, grants administration, and oversight of workforce development services be separated from the *delivery* of services. Agencies operating local One-Stop centers will be selected and funded by, and will receive their policy guidance and oversight from, the regional boards.

Most of the One-Stop advisory and planning functions currently take place at the regional level. At the Lake Jackson Career Center, a site-based management committee—comprised of the center manager (a TEC employee), program supervisors for UI, ES, JTPA, and JOBS, and the local veterans employment services representative (LVER)—is responsible for day-to-day administration, staffing, and scheduling. ES and UI functions had been integrated even prior to One-Stop implementation. ES/UI staff, who also have been trained to screen for JTPA and other program eligibility, are referred to as the "Customer Services" unit of the Center. The "Career Service Unit," which occupies an adjacent space within the Center, administers JTPA and several other eligibility-based programs. The partners with a full-time on-site presence at the Lake Jackson Center include:

- *Texas Workforce Commission.*[1] Programs administered by TWC employees include Employment Services (ES), Unemployment Insurance (UI), and Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) and JOBS case management. In addition, TWC has a service delivery contract with the Houston-Galveston Area Council for the delivery of JTPA services to dislocated workers and economically disadvantaged individuals, FSE&T, and Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS). As noted above, the Customer Services and Career Services Units maintain separate staff, even though both are TWC employees.
- *Interfaith.* Interfaith, a local service provider co-located at the Center as of April 1996, provides services to JOBS "Work First" participants in a multi-county area in the Gulf Coast region, through a contract with the Texas Department of Human Services.[2]

At the time of the site visit in May 1996, a number of other agencies and programs had arranged with the Center to establish an on-site presence as well. These include:

- *Palacious Independent School District.* School district staff were scheduled to maintain an on-site presence during the summer of 1996 as part of their contract to provide intake and case management for the JTPA Title II-B summer youth employment program. Although much of the actual work is carried out at local schools, the Center offers an office "base" for staff activities and provides filing cabinets and access to telephone message machines.
- *Service, Employment, and Retraining (SER).* Staff employed by SER, a JTPA Title II subcontractor to the Houston-Galveston Area Council, administer on-the-job training services for JTPA Title II recipients.

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[1] TEC has now become part of the new consolidated Texas Workforce Commission.

[2] Since the time of the site visit, administration of Work First, the welfare-to-work program has been consolidated within the Texas Workforce Commission, which has continued to subcontract with Interfaith for the delivery of services to JOBS participants in Lake Jackson.

- *Career Recovery Resource Inc.* is a non-profit Houston-based organization that operates the local *Title V Older Worker Program.* Three participants in the Title V Senior Community Service Program (SCSP) work part-time at the Center on a rotating basis. At least one SCSP trainee is on-site at any time during office hours. In addition to recruiting and performing intake for new SCSP participants, the Title V trainees act as "resource guides" for the Center's automated job information system and help administer and collate job application forms for local employers.
- *Consumer Credit Counseling Service* (CCCS) is a community-based non-profit organization that offers Center customers free counseling in budget planning, dealing with creditors, avoiding bankruptcy, consolidating debt, and managing finances during periods of unemployment. CCCS services are funded through contributions by creditors.
- *United Way* is an umbrella organization of non-profit service organizations that offers various kinds of on-site counseling and assistance at the Center. United Way services include crisis intervention and other emergency assistance including providing information about food pantries, utility assistance, and transportation to medical providers. The local staff of United Way and CCCS have received cross-training in each other's programs and provide on-site services to Center customers on alternating weeks.

In addition to organizations and programs that maintain staff on-site at the Center, there are additional partners in the local One-Stop effort with whom Center staff maintain frequent contact, and for whom they make referrals. These include the following:

- *Brazosport Community College*, located about 3 miles from the Center, maintained on-site staff at the Center on a trial basis during April and May 1996, but was unable to continue this relationship due to staffing and logistical problems. BCC continues, however, to offer job training and certification programs as a funded JTPA service provider, and offers testing and GED classes to the general public. Intake and assessment for these programs are done both at the Center and at the College.
- *Alvin Community College* (ACC), located 30 miles from the Center, provides JTPA-funded training, literacy, and adult basic education programs. Center JTPA staff provide intake and assessment at ACC two times a week during peak enrollment periods.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Center staff identified the effective communication of One-Stop goals and vision to staff as a crucial component of local One-Stop implementation. The Lake Jackson Center was not originally considered by the Area Council for One-Stop implementation, but was later included in the grant proposal for One-Stop funding largely because there was already co-location of key programs. Because of Lake Jackson's late selection as a One-Stop center, staff of the Center partner agencies were not as prepared for One-Stop implementation as staff at some other local sites. As a result, early attempts by Center management to move rapidly toward cross-program staff training and integration of services lacked the "buy-in" of staff.

Although the initial Center manager was described as a dynamic proponent of One-Stop concepts, including integration of services across Center partners, she tried to dictate changes through a "top-down" management approach rather than trying to communicate with staff and gain a consensus about the desirability of the planned changes. Local respondents indicated that staff had not had enough time to come "up to speed" on many of the core philosophies of the One-Stop vision. The rapid nature of the attempted One-Stop staffing changes, in combination with other stresses, led to widespread demoralization and dismay among Center staff.

After an initial ambitious effort to train all Center staff on all Center programs and services during the first grant implementation year, the Center manager left her position. An interim manager, a long-time TEC employee brought out of retirement, opted at least temporarily, for a more evolutionary approach. Respondents stressed that, in the future, it would be essential for One-Stop goals and visions to be communicated to *all* of the staff, including management, supervisors, and front-line staff. In response to this need, the new Center manager established an on-site management committee which now serves as the principal mechanism for communication among on-site partners. He has also attempted to build consensus about the pace and depth of changes necessitated by legislated program consolidation and the creation of a One-Stop Career Center.

Current efforts to promote communication and information exchange among local partners at the Center are impeded by the absence of a shared information system. For example, the computers used by the Customer Services staff are "dumb terminals" wired directly to TWC databases residing in the state mainframe. "We're suffering from that," said one respondent. "Everybody else is PC-based. There's no way to access other people's systems." As a result, Customer Services staff cannot access automated JTPA data and reports, Career Services partners cannot access TWC job listings, and none of the other partners can communicate with the state's automated welfare information system. Furthermore, according to another respondent, "There's no link of any kind from Lake Jackson [to]. . . other centers. None of the systems are integrated. Data can be entered, but that's about it." Plans are underway to remedy this situation. It is expected that a local area network (LAN) will be available in both Lake Jackson and another Gulf Coast Career Center by January 1997, and that the region will be linked by a wide area network (WAN) at about the same time.

Because Lake Jackson is part of a regional network of One-Stops, local Center staff communicate with both the region and the state on One-Stop issues. From the perspective of local Center partners, communication with the regional One-Stop steering committee is essential in order for local Center staff to receive "process facilitation" and training for One-Stop related activities. Because the regional steering committee, like the state One-Stop team, is comprised of representatives from all of the core partner agencies located at the Center, regional steering committee members act as the "first line" of communication with Center staff and management in helping to interpret changing policies and regulations in a One-Stop environment.

Center communication with the state "One-Stop team" takes place mainly through on-site visits, referred to as "benchmarkings." Benchmarkings offer the opportunity for informal discussions between Center staff and state One-Stop team members about the Center's progress, including specific implementation problems it is facing.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

Of the $213,000 One-Stop grant received by the Houston-Galveston Area Council to support the implementation of Gulf Coast Career Centers, $30,000 was allocated to the Lake Jackson Center. Most of the local grant was used for renovation of the physical facility to make it more suitable for One-Stop operations. Before One-Stop implementation, although the Customer Services and Career Services programs were located in the same building, they were physically separated by a wall. The One-Stop implementation funds were used to remove the wall and connect the two spaces. The One-Stop grant also was used to purchase equipment that could be used by all Center customers, including computers for a shared resource room and front entrance area and fax and copy machines available to all Center customers. The grant also enabled the

Center to purchase software, video materials, and reference books for the resource room and subscribe to publications for the resource room.

At the present time, although ES and UI programs are in the process of moving toward full integration, Career Services and Customer Services have remained largely separate and distinct, at least partly as a result of the accountability requirements of their separate categorical funding streams. At the time of our evaluation visit, no staff positions were cross-funded between the two programs and the agencies responsible for Career Services and Customer Services maintain separate rental agreements for their adjacent office space.

Although no formal cost-sharing agreements have been developed among the core partners key funding streams (ES, UI, JTPA, JOBS) at either the regional or Center level, the regional One-Stop steering committee has described cost allocation issues as a "major priority" for the second year of the implementation grant. The committee is also considering a variety of alternatives for integration of program budgets and fee structures, following the practices suggested in the DOL cost allocation TAG.[3]

Until now, emphasis has been placed on developing a "solid marriage" by coordinating services among all of the partner agencies. In the words of one regional respondent: "All partners had a commitment to bring to the table what we each had. Our first priority was to make service delivery more blended." Instead of formal cost-pooling arrangements for the operation of Center services, there is a great deal of informal sharing of equipment, resource materials, and staff to provide seamless core services to the general public. For example, JTPA funds are currently used to pay the salary for the coordinator for the resource library/resource room.

The One-Stop implementation grant also made it possible, for the first time, to purchase equipment that is officially for use by all Center customers. A fax machine and copier purchased with One-Stop implementation grant funds have been placed in locations accessible from both the Career Services and Customer Services portions of the building, and are clearly marked for use by the general public. Additionally, many of the materials in the Center's resource center—which is open for use by the general public—were purchased with implementation grant funds.

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[3] After the site visit was completed, the regional One-Stop steering committee applied to become a demonstration site to test the application of the principles in the DOL cost allocation TAG and has been approved as a pilot site.

Additional resources are shared informally. Telephones, copiers, and fax machines on the Customer Services "side" of the building are informally available for use by individual customers: "If a customer is over on this side and wants to use these machines they are free to do so," said one supervisor, "we don't make them go to the other side." In addition, Center staff from multiple partner agencies have contributed materials to the resource center and share in the cost of its operation by assisting Center customers in their use of the center.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of the Local Design

The primary catalysts for changes in the design and delivery of workforce development services in Lake Jackson were the federal One-Stop initiative and the enthusiastic response at the state and regional levels. The decision to co-locate in a Lake Jackson facility a few months prior to the receipt of the One-Stop grant by the Gulf Coast region, was made both to address practical concerns—the ES and UI programs had outgrown its former office space—as well as to further One-Stop principles.

Because co-location of partners pre-dated One-Stop implementation by only a few months, and because Center staff had not been directly involved in the initial stages of the regional One-Stop planning process, staff initially found themselves overwhelmed by what they saw as the Center manager's unrealistic expectations for rapid service integration. Despite this, the Lake Jackson Center has made progress in moving toward many of the federal One-Stop goals. Some of the most important features of the Center's One-Stop design, which are discussed in greater detail in later sections, include:

- Development of a system of *integrated intake.*
- Creation of a *resource room and library* and designation of a full-time staff person as *resource coordinator.*
- Adaptation of the *physical structure* and design of the Center facility so that Career Services and Customer Services areas are connected, and so that individual customers have free access to most of the building, rather than limiting them to a small waiting area when not accompanied by a Center staff member.

- Providing all Center customers with access to fax machines, copy machines, and long distance telephone lines for individual customer job searches.
- Development of an improved system of interagency referrals by *cross-training staff* about the on-site and off-site programs and services available to customers.
- The sharing of Center facilities with community organizations interested in the on-site delivery of complementary services to Center customers.
- Establishment of a series of *mini-seminars* available to the general public on subjects related to job search and employment preparedness.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

It is in the areas of universal access and customer choice that the Center has made its greatest strides since the onset of One-Stop implementation. Six priority areas have been identified as key to achieving the goal of universal access:

- The establishment of a self-service area that offers individual job seeking customers access to automated job banks, career exploration systems, and resume writing software.
- The creation of a resource room and library offering all Center customers access to general information on the labor market, occupations, wages, and industries, as well as information on education and training opportunities and current job openings.
- Enhancement of customer awareness of available services through a variety of means, including the creation of a "resource coordinator" position.
- The availability of all "core" DOL programs at the Center and the provision of information on these services through on-site orientations and mass marketing materials, such as brochures and flyers.
- The development of a sequence of modular job search seminars open to the general public on an open-enrollment basis.
- The provision of automated information on training providers and educational institutions via user-friendly career information systems appropriate for entry level as well as more highly skilled workers.

At the time of the evaluation visit, most of these components of universal services were already available to customers, although some were still in early stages of development and implementation. Automated career exploration and labor market information targeted both to new job entrants and experienced workers had recently become available (via the "Texas Cares" and "Rescue" systems). It was expected that resume writing software would shortly be available on the Center's self-service computers. A computer-assisted orientation to the Center had been prepared and was available for viewing in the lobby. Modular open-enrollment job search "mini-seminars" were offered to the general public on a regular basis.

Improving Center identification and visibility is also recognized as an important key to make Center services accessible to a broader customer base. At the time of the evaluation visit, most residents identified the Center with the "Texas Employment Commission," or as the "unemployment office," but new signs were being designed to strengthen its image as a "Career Center." Although Center staff believed that longer hours of operation would help make the Center more accessible to potential customers, the Center was open only until 5:00 p.m. largely due to the limited number of available staff.

Customer Choice

Center staff indicate that the changes that have taken place during the first year of One-Stop implementation represent a major improvement in the range of choices available to customers. Prior to the implementation of the One-Stop design, customers for ES and UI were required to sign in, fill out a form, and wait in a "bullpen" waiting area until they were called for a particular service. In contrast, all customers now have access to a wide range of Center facilities and services any time the Center is open, whether or not they have come to apply for a specific categorical workforce development program. According to one staff member, customers no longer feel that they are coming to the "unemployment office"—the new emphasis is on getting customers "quickly acclimated to the idea that they're in the world of work."

The new emphasis on self-service represents a major change in the way business is conducted at the Center. Although some people using the Center do not need help in using the self-service options, many of the customers in the Lake Jackson service area have worked in building and construction-related trades and are not proficient in the use of computers. According to local respondents, an important element in improving customer choice at the Center has been the creation of a "resource coordinator" position. The resource coordinator has a broad overview not only of all individualized and group services available at the Center, but also of the self-service options available to customers.

According to staff, the implementation of One-Stop has greatly changed the mix of clients and the variety of services offered at the Center. Staff and individual customers agree that this fact has, in turn, brought about a profound change in the relationship between customers and One-Stop staff. As expressed by one respondent: "Many of the offices before were divided into departments. You could see that some clients were embarrassed at being crowded into one section. Before the emphasis was on *waiting*, now they feel comfortable coming over to visit us and we can point them in the direction they want to go. We also give customers a list of places that they can go to get services that may not be offered here—they never go away empty handed."

Integrated Services

Across programs, the approach to integrated services that is now being pursued at the Center can be described as improving coordination and handoffs among Center staff responsible for different programs. Former ES and UI staff had been cross-trained for some time and form what is now known as the Customer Service Unit. Members of this unit are trained as "generalists" to recognize the need for case management or other specialized services. In addition to administering ES and UI programs, these staff screen for potential JTPA and other "Tier III" service eligibility.

The Career Service Unit is composed of "specialists" who administer JTPA, Food Stamp Employment and Training programs, Project RIO (Reintegration of Offenders), JOBS case management, and Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS). Staff in the Career Services Unit share case management responsibility through common case readings, so that the customer is provided cross-program service and duplication of effort is reduced. The Career Services Unit may also provide case management services for customers who are not eligible for individual programs when specific needs are recognized or individualized services are requested.

While staff retain distinct functions, the Lake Jackson staff have worked hard to make the lines between services offered to customers as transparent as possible, and as a result, Center customers are less and less aware of the separate program identities because of improved coordination across programs. In addition, services provided by one or another of the Center partners are available to the general public as part of the core One-Stop offerings. As described earlier, these include a staffed resource room and modular group seminars on a variety of employment preparation and job search topics.

In addition, staff representing the various programs at the Center met after One-Stop implementation to decide what data items were essential for determining minimum eligibility criteria for all programs, and developed a common application form now used during the integrated intake procedure.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Although the different funding streams administered by the One-Stop partners each have their own program-specific performance measures, both local and regional respondents stressed the need for some locally-determined performance measures to guide Center operations. In late 1995, the regional One-Stop partnership formed a "customer satisfaction work group," and several partners attended customer satisfaction seminars sponsored by the Texas Department of Commerce (which administered JTPA programs at that time). While the specific aim of the training was measuring customer satisfaction in JTPA Title III dislocated worker programs, members of this group felt that these processes had wider applicability not only in assessing programs offered at local career centers, but in assessing the facilities and services of the Center as a whole. A two-page prototype survey was developed for use by all customers served at Gulf Coast career centers. It was subsequently modified to fit on a 5 x 7 card.

Lake Jackson Center respondents also believe that they need a new performance management system that can capture system-wide performance to supplement measures of performance of individual programs. For example, among the customers not covered by current performance measures are employed persons who use the Center services to look for a better job or to upgrade their skills, customers who use the resource room or other self-service options without requesting services from any program-specific funding stream, and customers who find jobs through electronic access to automated job banks. Staff are concerned, however, that additional performance measurement efforts would either require additional funds or would take time away from what staff perceive as the more important goal of service provision.

Because current accountability procedures do not permit the Center to account for services provided to or outcomes achieved by a number of its customers, staff have considered asking for the social security number of all Center visitors. This would allow the Center to track whether individuals using Center services had entered employment over time. However, there were no immediate plans to implement this procedure at the time of the site visit.

Physical Facilities

The Lake Jackson Career Center is located near the end of a commercial strip mall near a state highway. For about ten years prior to the opening of the Lake Jackson Career Center, this location was used as the site for JTPA dislocated worker programs. In March, 1995, the Texas Employment Commission decided to move its ES/UI operations to office space adjacent to the existing JTPA program offices. This decision was made because the old TEC facility in a nearby town was no longer large enough to accommodate TEC services and because recent state legislation had encouraged co-location of workforce services. Partly because the key partners were already co-located at Lake Jackson, this site was selected by the regional One-Stop planning group to become a One-Stop career center.

Driving into the shopping mall, potential customers see a sign pointing to the "Texas Employment Commission." A request has been made to the highway division to have the sign changed to "Gulf Coast Career Center," but the changes had not been made as of the evaluation site visit. The Center is visible from the shopping area of the mall. Of the approximately 11,000 square feet of space available in the Center facility, about 4500 square feet is used as office space for the 29 Center staff. The remainder houses common areas, such as the resource room/library, four conference rooms large enough to accommodate up to twenty people, a computer lab with 16 personal computers, and break rooms for both customers and staff. There is adequate parking and the building is accessible to persons with disabilities.

As described earlier, One-Stop implementation grant funds were used to remove a wall between what were to be known as the Career Services and Customer Services portions of the facility. Although the current facility is joined, the space assignments still reflect the origins of the Center in two separate but side-by-side Career Services and Customer Services operations. However, the flow of clients within the Center was redesigned so that there would be no "bullpen" customer waiting area which separated customers from staff. Currently, when a customer enters the Center through the front door, he/she enters a small reception area which contains several "Job Express" terminals and a desk staffed by a "Resource Coordinator."

Customers have access to all areas of the Center. To the left is a resource room/library with publications related to employment and training, a computer with information on career exploration ("Texas CARES") and several additional computers that can be used to prepare resumes. As mentioned previously, the office space is divided into two major sections, the Customer Service section in which UI, ES, JOBS, and Veterans Employment Services (VETS) are provided. Guest desks are provided in this area for use by various local community organizations. A hallway which has a fax machine and a copier for customer use leads to the Career Services office area on the left. On the right there is a computer lab with 16 terminals, one of four conference rooms, and a customer break room.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

The ES and UI functions have been consolidated at the Lake Jackson Center and were provided by an integrated ES/UI staff prior to the One-Stop initiative. The VETS program, although also administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), has been and continues to be staffed separately from ES/UI functions. Under the current "coordination rather than consolidation" approach to integration of services, JTPA services, although they are also provided by TWC staff under contract to the Houston-Galveston Area Council, are delivered through the separate Career Services Unit staff.

Supervisors for all core programs—ES/UI, VETS, JTPA, and JOBS—meet with the Center site manager (a TWC employee) in weekly site-based management meetings. There have been discussions of forming cross-agency functional teams for job development, placement, and for employer services, but at the present time, these functions have not been integrated across the core partners. Services funded by other co-located programs, such as the Senior Community Service Employment Program, United Way, and Consumer Credit, are provided by paid employees, interns, and volunteers associated with each program partner.

At the time of the evaluation visit, other than the consolidation of ES/UI staffing, no staff positions were cross-funded by the major Center program funding streams (ES/UI, JTPA, and JOBS). Of the 29 full-time equivalent staff at the Center, 13 staff are employed in the delivery of JTPA services and 10 staff in the delivery of UI/ES. Other programs with dedicated TWC staff included VETS, Food Stamps Employment and Training, UI Profiling, and a Reintegration of Offenders program (Project RIO). A 1.5-FTE position for Human Services staff is funded by Brazoria County.

Thus, with the exception of the Customer Services programs, in which there is a high degree of functional integration, program-specific staff depend on a shared intake procedure and coordinated cross-program referrals to accomplish integration of services for customers. As a result of these coordination efforts, initial intake staff have knowledge of basic requirements for all the programs offered at the site, and staff from all programs participate in the regularly scheduled orientations for individuals coming to use the Center.

Capacity Building

Staff training has been a two-edged sword at the Lake Jackson Center. On the one hand, the site-based management team indicated that staff training related to One-Stop implementation has been very useful. Training has been provided through a number of sources, including the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security (IAPES), the Houston Club Institute, and TEC-sponsored regional "train the trainers" sessions. Staff particularly praised a series of training modules on team-building, change management, and quality customer services that was prepared by the Harris County Private Industry Council, one of the agencies participating in the regional One-Stop partnership. In addition, several respondents had recently attended an off-site training on diversity called "Across Borders" and had found that it improved their ability to understand different organizational cultures and communicate across agency lines.

On the other hand, local respondents noted that the scheduling of multiple training initiatives during a short time period has exacerbated the work demands and time pressures on staff. Throughout 1995 and 1996, staff vacancies combined with increased customer flows made it difficult for TEC staff to keep up with their assigned workloads. Moreover, One-Stop training was only one of a series of capacity-building initiatives affecting Center staff. According to one supervisor: "We've had all types of training and meetings since February [1996]. These have included team management training, diversity training, and training on the redesign of UI benefits [to implement remote call-in for the initiation of UI claims]. Oftentimes we'll have two to four staff members out of the office in a given week. Nobody objects to the idea of training, but much of it has little to do with building Career Centers."

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The Lake Jackson Career Center has developed an integrated intake form, on an interim basis, to support integrated customer reception and referral. However, at the present time, there is no integrated client-level management information system across the different participating programs. The development of an integrated MIS is widely perceived as a state-level function. Local initiatives to integrate eligibility determination and case management functions depend on progress being made at the state level.

Client confidentiality, especially as it relates to the need to protect sensitive information in case records maintained by the Department of Human Services (DHS), is considered another barrier to full integration of case management functions at the local level. These barriers were perceived to exist even though many respondents believed that they could be overcome through the use of security procedures such as passwords. Similar confidentiality issues regarding confidential information about employers in ES/UI databases have been resolved through the use of passwords that restrict staff access to such information on a "need to know" basis.

Improvements in Labor Market Information and Related Technology-Based Products

As in the development of an integrated MIS, most of the initiatives to develop One-Stop technology-based products are viewed as state functions. The primary technology-based products developed at the state level include Texas CARES, an automated career information delivery system designed for individuals with little work experience; RESCUE, a case management tool designed to help more experienced workers determine additional training needs; Job Express, an electronic labor exchange system; and Socrates, an automated labor market information system. (See the Texas state profile for more information on these products.) Direct customer access to these products was a very recent phenomenon at the Lake Jackson Career Center at the time of the site visit and Center staff were still learning about the levels of staff support needed in order for customers to use these products. Local respondents indicated that Texas CARES was considered the easiest to use. Both RESCUE and Job Express required that staff spend time with customers explaining their use. According to one staff person, "They're supposed to be user-friendly systems, but they still require a lot of staff intervention."

Hard-copy versions of labor market information, prepared at the state or regional level, are also provided to employer customers. For example, the Center distributes monthly updates of labor market information, prepared by the Houston-Galveston TEC regional office, to local employers. Businesses are provided with labor market information on the Brazoria Metropolitan Statistical Area, employer guides and information on topics such as wage and hour laws and other employment law issues, lists of independent contractors, and information about hiring practices and how to prepare employee handbooks.

Electronic kiosks, which have been developed in Texas to provide access to labor market information and job listings public locations with high pedestrian traffic, had not yet been installed in Brazoria County at the time of the site visit. Local respondents look forward to using kiosks as an effective way to "get information out to rural communities," and have identified a local Wal-Mart store as a good location for a kiosk. They are currently waiting for state approval of the funding needed to install a kiosk. Some respondents, however, noted that they had heard that the information available through kiosks is not always regularly updated.

Marketing

State and local One-Stop actors often share responsibility for marketing One-Stop Centers. State-wide marketing efforts for One-Stop, however, were delayed during the massive reorganization of workforce development agencies into the new Texas Workforce Commission during 1996. As a result of delays in the development of a formal statewide marketing plan, Lake Jackson, like other local areas, developed its own local marketing strategy. Respondents indicated, however, that they had hoped that the state could provide a newsletter or multi-media marketing tools that could support local marketing efforts.

A detailed career center marketing plan has been developed at the regional and local levels and is being implemented in Lake Jackson/Brazoria County. Local respondents recognize the importance of marketing in helping to change the public's perception of the Center from that of unemployment office to integrated career center. As part of the local marketing plan, advertisements for Center services, including "Job Search Seminars" and "Career Assistance," have been run on a weekly basis in a variety of local and regional newspapers. Newsletters and brochures prepared by various Center partners have described the Center's activities with displaced homemakers as well as its Title V Older Workers program. Center services have been listed in publications prepared by the local Chambers of Commerce and other civic organizations.

In addition to formal marketing efforts, local respondents indicate that in a small community such as Lake Jackson in which "everybody knows one another," informal marketing is often one of the most effective ways to conduct outreach. "This is a very tight-knit community," explained one respondent. "Much of the 'marketing' happens when we get people in here who tell their neighbors about our services." Staff are also actively involved in a variety of public presentations and displays publicizing Center services. For example, Center services are publicized in a variety of social calendars, and the Center sponsors job fairs at local malls and at the county fair. Many local staff are also involved in a variety of community activities in schools, churches, and veterans organizations, and are regularly called on to speak at a variety of events, including those sponsored by high schools and United Way. Center staff also address employer groups on questions regarding taxes and unemployment claims.

Discussions about expanding local marketing efforts in the future have addressed the possibility of obtaining free public service announcements from the local cable television channel. Other ideas suggested have included posting announcements in free papers and distributing informational flyers in locations such as stores where large numbers of people congregate.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

The Center has drawn on the concept of an inverted pyramid of services in which it is anticipated that the largest number of individual customers will use self-service options, with increasingly smaller numbers will use group services, and the smallest number will access intensive individualized services.

The Center offers all customers information about the range of programs and services offered by Center partners and a preliminary or final determination of eligibility for these programs. Upon arrival at the Center, customers are offered the following program-specific service options, based on their expressed interest and eligibility:

- Employment services (ES), available to the general public.
- Unemployment insurance benefits (UI).
- JTPA programs and services for dislocated workers and economically disadvantaged individuals.
- JOBS services for AFDC recipients.
- Food Stamp Employment and Training Services for recipients of Food Stamps.
- Veterans' Employment and Training Services.

- Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits for dislocated workers whose employers were affected by international competition.
- Older Worker Programs available under Title V of the Older Americans Act.

In addition, core Center services—available to the general public at no cost—include:

- Access to on-line job listings through the state's Job Express and America's Job Bank.
- Other automated labor market information.
- Access to the Career Library, which offers a variety of publications on local and national companies, and jobs and salaries, as well as job search manuals and other materials.
- Access to free facsimile machines and telephones for contacting employers.
- Information and referrals to supportive services and other community resources.
- Information on scholarships and career training.

Core services available on a self-service basis will be expanded over time. The Center is planning to offer a variety of computer-assisted learning options as well as access to resume-writing software.

Group workshops and seminars, also available at no cost to the general public include:

- *Total Image Update.* Participants learn how to dress for interviews and careers while remaining true to their personalities and budgets.
- *Money Management.* These seminars, offered by Consumer Credit Counseling, help participants learn how to manage their budgets, especially when their personal financial situations have changed.
- *Stress Management.* This seminar teaches how to cope with the stress of unemployment and the job search process.
- *Exploring Career Options.* This seminar covers areas such as making use of career interest surveys, exploring interest areas, and choosing careers.
- *Job Search.* This seminar covers implementing job search plans and using Center and community resources in the job search process.

Services for Employer Customers

At the time of the site visit, an employer service unit had recently been formed at the Lake Jackson Center, and was in the early phases of planning for the expansion of employer services. Currently, most services to employers continue to be rather traditional—the filling of job orders and assistance with unemployment claims questions. Although there has been discussion of having individuals in the Center act as "employer service representatives" for different companies, this system has not been formally instituted. Rather, employers generally seek out the people with whom they have developed a long-standing working relationship, and find that these people are usually the best equipped to answer their questions.

Center staff indicate that they are looking forward to expanding employer services. One of the biggest challenges is "getting the message out" that a broader array of employer services is available. To date, marketing Center services to employers has occurred largely through informal contacts between Center staff and local employers. Services that are currently available, though under-utilized, include the provision of information to employers on training opportunities at proprietary schools and training assistance paid for through the state's Skills Development Fund. On an informal employer survey designed to find out what services employers would like from a career center, the most common responses were "qualified workers" and useful labor market information.

Employer services are better developed at the regional level, where there are employer services specialists working out of the TEC regional office in Houston. Regional employer services representatives make visits to outlying communities and assist center staff in designing customized recruitment and training services for local employers.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

A focus group was conducted with eight individual Center customers, all of whom turned out to be participants in the JTPA dislocated worker program. These customers expressed satisfaction with the quality of the services they were receiving. However, there was no opportunity to discuss how the general public was reacting to the available core Center services.

Center staff indicated that the self-service technology-based products introduced as part of the One-Stop effort are less relevant to job seeker customers in rural areas than they would be in more urbanized areas, because most customers are already aware of the major employers and contact many employers directly to inquire about employment opportunities. This appears to be less true for more highly-skilled workers, who were described as valuing access to electronic job postings, and who respond in great numbers to automated job listings for positions requiring advanced technological skills.

Employers

A focus group was held with five human resource or personnel representatives from area employers. These employers were primarily interested in the job placement function and other services traditionally offered through TEC, and were generally positive about these services. All the employers indicated that the most important thing to them about the Lake Jackson Center was that they could deal with a *local* office. According to one representative, "If this office wasn't here, we'd have to deal with someone in Lubbock or Houston, and they would have little of the local knowledge or the local people needed for the job." People here understand our industries -- you have to know how to have a rapport with foremen, with supervisors."

Employer respondents expressed some hesitation about the move toward more reliance on technology-based products for job seekers. "Now it's up to the individual to find their own job," said one respondent about on-line job searches, "but a lot of these workers really need more one-on-one contact. There needs to be someone to intercede on behalf of the employee. TEC used to do that for people. More and more, now they're turning it back to the individual to find their own jobs." At the same time, employers recognized the need for an expansion of "traditional" job matching services, and of the need for a comprehensive system which can not only provide job referrals, but also help job seekers enhance their job search and specific occupational skills.

Local employers emphasized the need for formal training and skills certification to prepare job seekers for employment in the local labor market. They noted that even in construction jobs, certification levels were being pushed upwards, making it more difficult for people with fewer certifiable skills to find employment. Most of the industry representatives said that they now insisted on some form of craft certification. According to one respondent, "It used to be that contractors hired the first 50 people that applied for a job. If somebody looked strong, they hired him. Now we need to put an emphasis on training for jobs. We're worried there won't be anyone around to do the jobs we have locally when our current workers drop out in their late 40s and 50s. Centers like this one can make a big difference in getting people into occupations and training that are needed around here."

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

The federal One-Stop initiative has clearly influenced the direction of the Lake Jackson Career Center, although the rapid pace of moving from co-location of services (which existed even before the One-Stop implementation grant) toward integration of services has been a source of tension for Center staff, particularly during the early months of the implementation grant period. The state has provided information and technical assistance to the regional steering committee and directly to Lake Jackson management and staff throughout its development as a One-Stop. As the integration of programs under the Texas Workforce Commission is completed, it is expected that state-level policy guidance will continue to be an important element of One-Stop implementation in Texas.

The most important influence on the Lake Jackson Center has been the thoughtful planning process and clear vision provided by the regional One-Stop steering committee for the Gulf Coast region. Local staff praise the planning efforts at the regional level and view the regional steering committee as being committed financially and emotionally to the One-Stop initiative and sympathetic to local implementation challenges. Although Lake Jackson is part of a region in which a vibrant and dynamic team of One-Stop planners is attempting to develop a network of One-Stop centers, it will take time and a great deal of effort for the full One-Stop vision to be implemented in this rural/industrial county, 50 miles distant from Houston and isolated from other urban centers.

To date, the Lake Jackson Center has made strong progress in creating a system that responds to the employment and training needs of individual job seekers and local staff look forward to offering a menu of enhanced services to employers in the near future. The Center, after only a year of operation, is still in the early stages of developing an identity as an integrated "Career Center." Part of this may have to do with the fact that planning functions were concentrated at the regional level in Houston. It is only more recently that *Center* staff have participated in a meaningful way in decision making through a site-based management committee. Now that there is more of a sense of local control, ideas about improving Center services are being generated locally. "We now have a lot of ideas about where we want to go," said a local respondent, "and in about six months we think we will be in a place where we are comfortable with the changes."

The experiences at the Center highlight several important lessons regarding building One-Stops. In the early phases of implementation, staff had little input into the design of the local system for service delivery. Because planning for the system had occurred at the regional level (in Houston), Center staff were unable to share the vision of One-Stop service during the initial months of the implementation grant period, despite (or perhaps because of) the presence of a dynamic center manager. The situation improved considerably when a local management team was established consisting of supervisory staff from the participating programs. As this management team began to establish its own goals and vision for the Center, they were able to reestablish a sense of local control over the transformation process.

Center staff indicated that they have learned the importance of several factors that can facilitate the transformation of workforce development services to realize the One-Stop vision:

- The ability to set realistic expectations of what can and cannot be accomplished: these include the expectations of *customers, staff,* and *the Center as a whole.*
- The encouragement of the active involvement by all staff, including management teams at the earliest stages of the One-Stop planning process. Lake Jackson Center staff believe that many of the problems that occurred during early implementation could have been avoided had there been more local input into the design and vision of the Center.
- Placing high priority on communication across partner agencies among Center staff, with particular emphasis on building relations among supervisory staff. With regular forums for discussion, supervisors can relay the problems that they perceive among staff, such as staff overload and stress, and can take steps to modify strategies toward One-Stop implementation as the need arises.

Despite some early challenges, local respondents were visibly proud of what had been accomplished at the new Center, particularly when compared to the former ES/UI and JTPA operations. Customers are no longer separated from the staff, but can come directly to the desk of anyone in the Center. There is no need to wait until you are called—customers can make good use of their time in the resource room, computer lab, or can contact employers immediately by using the phone banks and fax machine available to them. Where once customers experienced a sense of frustration with "the system," and often felt a sense of embarrassment at having to turn to "the unemployment office" for assistance, they now have a wide variety of resources at hand to speed re-entry into the job market.

APPENDIX V

STATE OF WISCONSIN
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During December 1995

STATE OF WISCONSIN
One-Stop Profile

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STATE OF WISCONSIN
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT

The state of Wisconsin has come into the One-Stop demonstration with a well-developed approach that has been extensively piloted in a number of local sites over the past ten years. Local One-Stop service sites, called *Job Centers*, have been conceptualized since 1987. The USDOL One-Stop implementation grant is supporting Wisconsin's efforts to accelerate and expand upon the One-Stop approach statewide.

There are many contextual variables that have influenced, and continue to influence, One-Stop planning, design, implementation, and progress in the state of Wisconsin. The primary federal-level influence is clearly the prospective change from multiple funding streams to the consolidation of workforce development programs under block grants. Developed as a system to promote *service coordination* in the context of multiple categorical programs, Wisconsin's One-Stop approach is expected to evolve more rapidly toward *service integration* once federal block grant legislation is passed.

At the state level, there are numerous contextual variables influencing One-Stop implementation and progress, three of which appear to be key: 1) the merger between two major state agencies; 2) a controversial welfare reform initiative that eliminates AFDC; and 3) state legislation requiring the realignment of SDA boundaries. These influences, singularly and in tandem, represent strong challenges for the state, but are generally believed to be supportive of the statewide One-Stop initiative. Each is briefly described below.

- The merger between the Department of Industry, Labor & Human Relations (DILHR) and the Department of Health & Social Services (DH&SS), scheduled to be effective 7/1/96, will create a new Department of Workforce Development. This major organizational change represents a consolidation of key One-Stop players. In the long run, consolidation should enhance One-Stop coordination efforts by unifying the entities responsible for school-to-work, welfare-to-work, vocational rehabilitation, and JTPA, ES, and UI programs under the leadership of a single state agency. In the short run, the magnitude of these organizational changes has caused uncertainty about exactly how agency policies and staff functions will be affected by consolidation.

- The state of Wisconsin has long been active in welfare reform initiatives, testing various approaches through federal waivers to the AFDC program. The state's newest welfare reform proposal, called *Wisconsin Works* or *W-2*, would replace welfare grants to employable individuals with a system of services designed to encourage immediate attachment to the labor force. This highly controversial initiative is still being designed and debated in the state legislature. Regardless of its eventual form, the welfare reform initiative is expected to increase greatly the demands made on the state's workforce development service system. The state is committed to using its Job Center system for delivery of employment-related services to *W-2* participants as part of a "Partnership for Full Employment."
- A bill currently before the state legislature recommends the realignment of local workforce development planning areas from 17 (the current number of SDAs) to a smaller number, perhaps 10. Although reducing the number of SDAs is believed to be facilitative of the One-Stop initiative (e.g., increasing administrative efficiency in response to decreasing resources), the proposed shift would necessitate substantial reorganization among local planning teams that have already made significant strides to develop collaborative partnerships and design coordinated services within the current planning areas.

It is within this environment of uncertainty amidst substantial changes that Wisconsin is striving to support the creation of coordinated local workforce development systems. Although the state wants to provide effective guidance in the development of local One-Stop systems, it has declined to prescribe a standardized design for local Job Centers to follow, for several reasons. First, state One-Stop policymakers feel that the federal program environment is still too uncertain to make final decisions about what One-Stop systems should look like. Second, the state is committed to offering substantial latitude for local discretion so that the local designs for the statewide system "percolate from the front line." According to the state's vision, services that respond to customer "needs" or "demands" should be the primary consideration that drives local design variants. As a result, the state has developed only a general blueprint for what a local Job Center should look and feel like—the *Job Center Standards* (described later). The state has also undertaken state-level projects in the areas of capacity building, customer satisfaction, cost allocation, facilities, and marketing to support local One-Stop design and implementation efforts.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

State-Level Organization and Governance

The entity with oversight over all workforce development programs is the *State Human Resources Investment Council* (HRIC), established by state law in December, 1994. Although similar in structure and function to the former governing body—the State Job Training Coordinating Council, called the "Wisconsin Jobs Council"—the HRIC was established to be more comprehensive in scope and include top-level agency administrators, as well as to be responsive to DOL's One-Stop Solicitation for Grant Application (SGA). The 30-member HRIC consists of three working committees, each devoted to a different set of issues and challenges. Plans are currently underway to restructure the HRIC into a smaller *Council on Workforce Excellence.*

The *State Collaborative Planning Team* (SCPT), established in 1989, is a state-level interagency team that guides the One-Stop effort in Wisconsin. This team consists of middle and upper-level managers from all of the nine One-Stop partner agencies. The role of the State Collaborative Planning Team is to advise the HRIC on One-Stop implementation and progress. (This structure is mirrored at the local level with Local Collaborative Planning Teams that guide local One-Stop plan development.) The state partner agencies involved in Wisconsin's One-Stop effort are:

1. *Department of Industry, Labor & Human Relations* (DILHR), which is responsible for JTPA, ES, Labor Market Information, and Apprenticeship programs, through its Jobs, Employment & Training (JETS) Division, as well as UI, and School-to-Work programs (through its Office of Workforce Excellence).
2. *Department of Health & Social Services* (DH&SS), which has responsibility for the JOBS program for AFDC recipients, the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program, through a separate VR division.
3. *Wisconsin Technical College System Board,* which sets policy and coordinates across 16 autonomous technical college districts that have their own taxing authority and are primarily responsible for post-secondary and vocational education.
4. *Department of Public Instruction* (DPI), which has authority over K-12 education.
5. *Educational Approval Board.*
6. *Department of Veterans' Affairs.*

7. *Department of Development*, which is responsible for economic development programs and initiatives.
8. *Department of Corrections.*

By virtue of the historical context, administrative authority, or responsibility for specific funding streams, some One-Stop partner agencies have more prominence and day-to-day operational involvement than others. Thus, although the state's One-Stop initiative represents a partnership among these agencies, DILHR's role is prominent because it is responsible for a number of the programs mandated for inclusion in the One-Stop initiative (e.g., JTPA, ES, LMI, Apprenticeship, and UI), has been experimenting with similar initiatives for several years, and is responsible for administration of the USDOL One-Stop implementation grant through its JETS Division. In addition, notwithstanding the general spirit of collaboration among all partners, three key players bring major funding streams to the effort: DILHR, DH&SS (soon to be merged with DILHR) and the Technical College System. (These three key partners at the state level mirror the mandatory "core partners" at the local level, as described later.)

Each partner agency brings to the One-Stop effort a unique program culture and set of operating principles. The need to cultivate this broad range of partnerships while respecting differences in the cultures, missions, and perspectives of participating agencies has been a challenge. Some agencies, for instance, by virtue of their mission, target services to a particular population segment. Others focus more on services to the general public. Moreover, some partner agencies are smaller in size as well as scope, are "non-mandated" partners, and have struggled with "being heard."

By and large, the challenge of dealing with this "multi-culturalism" has been met by state efforts to maintain clear and open communication across and within agencies and involve all actors on interagency teams and workgroups. One-Stop partner agencies are learning to work together, sometimes struggling, but moving forward as norms and other behavioral guidelines are established, either formally or informally. Partner agencies are beginning to recognize that, over time, state agencies' roles within the One-Stop system may evolve as partners focus more upon their core competencies, and thereby add value to the overall system. Thus, some agencies are experiencing—and probably will continue to experience—a redefinition or reshaping of roles and responsibilities, particularly in cases where agencies have traditionally focused on a particular segment of the population.

State Framework for Local Governance

The framework for local governance is similar to that in place at the state level. *Local Collaborative Planning Teams* (LCPTs) are the local planning structures guiding local One-Stop efforts and consisting of representatives from each local partner agency. Indeed, a critical stage of local-level implementation of the Job Center initiative in the state of Wisconsin was the formation of the LCPT in each of the 17 current SDAs. Formed initially to develop "core coordination documents" describing the coordination of programs and services within each local planning area, LCPTs are responsible for planning how to expend the majority of funding received under Wisconsin's federal One-Stop Implementation grant.

In addition, local policy boards—called *Human Resource Investment Boards* (HRIBs)—are expected to be in place by January 1997. Although many of the specific elements are yet to be determined (e.g., required composition of the boards, whether boards will play an administrative or merely a policy guidance role with respect to local Job Centers), the primary purpose of the HRIBs will be to ensure that One-Stop customers and investors (i.e., individual job seeking customers, employers, and taxpayers) have a voice in the development of the local One-Stop system and that customer feedback is used to improve Job Center system performance. The state's vision is that these local boards will not deliver services directly. Instead, they will provide policy direction to, and conduct strategic planning for, the local One-Stop Job Center system. In general, local boards will have oversight responsibility for the same programs locally that the state Council on Workforce Excellence will oversee on a statewide basis.

Local governance has emerged as a politically-charged issue and a key challenge for the state. One of the reasons for the volatility of the issue is probably related to the fact that HRIBs are being planned *after,* rather than *before,* the development of LCPTs and local One-Stop centers. Therefore, as latecomers to the local planning process, the HRIBs may be seen as a potentially destabilizing influence on local interagency partnerships that have evolved up to this point. In addition, although HRIBs are expected to perform a strategic planning function within a framework devised by the state Council on Workforce Excellence, the details of the relationship between state and local governance boards is not yet clear.

The state has responded to the tension surrounding the issue of local governance by soliciting local input through a *Local Dialogue* process that took place from July

1995 through September 1995. Each local area received funding to sponsor formal dialogues, providing a forum for discussions pertaining to the possible structure, composition and oversight responsibilities of the HRIB. A report on these meetings was discussed by the State HRIC in December 1995. Due to the complexity and sensitive nature of local governance issues and the uncertainty surrounding federal legislation, recommendations on HRIBs were postponed until May 1996. Presently, the State HRIC is considering a number of different models for the proposed HRIBs. Both state and local One-Stop actors agree that the best-case scenario would have been the establishment of local governing boards or the consolidation of existing disparate ones earlier in the One-Stop implementation process.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

The primary method to establish and maintain open lines of communication and facilitate ongoing coordination between and among state-level partners is the use of teams, in which broad-based participation is the norm. This starts at the top with the State Collaborative Planning Team, which has representation from all of the partner agencies, ensuring each a voice in One-Stop planning and implementation. In addition, numerous interagency teams focus on particular functions related to the One-Stop initiative, such as Capacity Building, Marketing, and Technology Initiatives, each described later. Local One-Stop actors are usually represented on these interagency functional teams as well, since local input is placed at a premium. The information generated from the various teams is, in turn, provided to the "Job Center Team," which coordinates the implementation of specific actions related to each topic area. Although state-level partners have generally found the level of interagency coordination and cooperation facilitative and, in some cases, "awesome," there is growing awareness that an increasing number of workgroups and teams could become counterproductive.

Communication between state and local One-Stop staff makes use of several different channels. Broad-based state and local participation on various planning workgroups is one way of keeping communication channels open and soliciting local input. Statewide and regional meetings and conferences have also taken place to discuss One-Stop design and implementation issues and share information about local variants of the One-Stop approach. Moreover, another means of communicating with local Job Centers is through state "Local Liaisons," each responsible for a particular territory. The Local Liaisons identify One-Stop implementation problems, provide technical assistance resources, and work closely with local areas during the process of local One-Stop design and implementation. Information obtained by the Local Liaisons also flows to the Job Center Team.

The staff manager of the One-Stop Implementation Grant within DILHR's JETS Division also circulates "Information Memos" to Local Collaborative Planning Team leads to share information about One-Stop developments at the state level. Information Memos cover a range of issues from responses to questions that have been asked, to information about new issues that are arising. Although the information in these memos is presented in a conversational and informative way and appears to go to key local One-Stop actors, the Waukesha respondents indicated that there are some problems in getting information to the field in a timely manner.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES

The initial investments to pilot a comprehensive and seamless workforce development service system in Wisconsin were made with state general revenue funds. Other major funding sources used to support the development of different aspects of the One-Stop system include several ES Automation Grants (largely responsible for the creation of JobNet, the state's automated labor exchange system) and a five-year $27M School-to-Work grant. Therefore, although the USDOL One-Stop implementation grant represents a significant source of funding that has indeed acted as a catalyst for Job Center implementation statewide, it is only one of a number of funding sources contributing to the One-Stop system and supporting structures, initiatives and products.

The state received a first-year One-Stop implementation grant of $3.5M, and a first-year separate LMI grant of over $400,000. It has been the state's intention to use One-Stop grant monies for the most "prudent" types of activities—activities that would not be funded otherwise—with the lion's share of the state's implementation grant (i.e., over 70%) being allocated to local areas in the form of: (1) local implementation grants (allocated to all local planning areas based upon the size of the civilian labor force), (2) local governance/transition grants to support the creation of a local Human Resource Investment Board, and (3) local pilot projects (competitively awarded based on local innovations). As a result of receiving less funding than expected (30% less than the $5M requested), the budgets for several planned areas, including information systems and the three types of local grants, were reduced.

Because the state decided to allocate the majority of One-Stop Implementation Grant funds to Local Collaborative Planning Teams on a planning year basis, with an initial 12-month implementation period of July 1, 1995 through June 30, 1996, the expenditure rate has been slow. It is expected that spending rates in the latter part of the implementation period will increase.

In addition, as a result of the myriad organizational changes that have been taking place—partly a result of the One-Stop restructuring and partly a result of other factors such as federal or state program cuts—several partner agencies have experienced staffing reductions. For example, local JTPA administrators, who are often key partners on local collaborative planning teams, have sometimes found it difficult to carry out both One-Stop planning and conduct of their program-specific responsibilities as a result of reductions in overall program funding. Similarly, ongoing budget cuts within the federal ES program have resulted in a series of staffing cutbacks within state and local Job Service operations. Indeed, one of the original incentives for self-service methods of delivery in Job Centers was the high level of staff reductions throughout the Job Service. In some cases, state-and local-level staff reductions have necessitated either putting off One-Stop development activities (e.g., the state-level marketing effort for the One-Stop implementation grant was temporarily postponed when several state-level communications staff were let go), or coming up with ways to do more with less.

Although seeking a high degree of coordination is a clearly established norm among state agency partners, efforts to implement a One-Stop system have been undertaken without efforts to consolidate individual program funding streams. Because of a view that fiscal accountability requires the maintenance of separate funding streams, state agency partners in Wisconsin have not negotiated cost-sharing, cost-pooling, or similar arrangements. Each agency charges its activities to its own program funds. Partners generally believed that until federal funds were provided to states in the form of block grants, true integration of services through consolidation of funding would be thwarted by the need to account for each funding stream using different rules and requirements.

This was also the case in the local site visited. Different partners with different reporting requirements were not eager to merge funds from different sources to support integrated service delivery designs. And, in terms of following the guidance offered in DOL's Cost Allocation TAG, it was believed that, although the TAG was an excellent piece of work technically, following the principles and practices espoused in the TAG would place local areas at risk, particularly for expenditures from non-DOL funds. The financial liability and potential for disallowed costs were perceived to be so prohibitive that local areas would avoid any new way of allocating costs "like the plague."

At the time of the site visit, the state was participating in discussions with a few local areas (not visited by the research team) about undertaking pilots to test the cost-sharing approaches described in the Cost Allocation TAG. However, the state described these sites as facing difficulties because of the fact that in Wisconsin the One-Stop initiative pertains to numerous agencies and programs beyond DOL, which have not necessarily approved the approaches recommended. In general, it is believed that the cost allocation practices described in the TAG are best designed to deal with fully integrated service delivery approaches, which local sites are reluctant to pursue prior to the implementation of workforce development block grants. As a result, a wait-and-see stance with respect to cost allocation issues and practices has been adopted by many key players.

An issue of particular interest to the numerous One-Stop stakeholders nationwide is the issue of cost savings or prospective cost savings resulting from the establishment of a One-Stop service delivery system. Although there are clearly areas in which cost savings have been experienced in the state of Wisconsin (e.g., increasing the emphasis on self-service access by job seekers to automated job listings has reduced the need for field staff to support job search activities), the fluidity and dynamism of the current environment and the embryonic nature of One-Stop system-level accountability procedures makes assessing the level of cost savings difficult at best. Whereas the need to identify cost savings and to demonstrate cost-effectiveness is perceived as important at the state level and early pilot efforts identified specific overhead savings, it was strongly believed that it would be difficult to measure cost reductions or to place a specific dollar value on the increased benefits in terms of the improved quality of customer services.

DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of State Design

The One-Stop initiative in the state of Wisconsin represents a work-in-progress that can be traced back nearly a decade. The framework that materialized in 1990 for a more efficient and effective service delivery system was predicated upon the desire to increase the level of coordination among key funding streams: Wagner-Peyser, JTPA, JOBS, Vocational Education, and Adult Education. (Although the School-to-Work initiative in Wisconsin is housed within DILHR, the One-Stop initiative and the School-to-Work initiative have developed along independent but parallel paths.) Based upon this early vision of a coordinated service delivery system, the state council at the time promoted the "Job Center" concept, secured state funding for local pilots, involved local areas in the planning process, and established local structures called Local Collaborative Planning Teams to develop local coordination plans. Coordinating these funding streams required the involvement of four key partners at the local level (which still represent the required minimum core partners)—the PIC or JTPA administrative entity, the local Job Service, the JOBS administrative entity, and the local Technical College District.

In its initial efforts to develop a seamless and comprehensive workforce development system, the state identified five specific activities and services believed to be common across all programs: intake, assessment, case management, employer services, and interagency areawide planning. Therefore, local Job Centers were built upon interagency practices that unify these five functions. The state established "benchmarks" for each function to guide local areas in their development of customer-oriented delivery systems.. These benchmarks evolved into Wisconsin's *Job Center Standards*, widely considered to be the backbone of the state's design for the One-Stop system.

Wisconsin's input into the federal One-Stop design resulted in a fair degree of congruence between Wisconsin's efforts in these five functional areas and what USDOL ultimately proposed as "minimum core services" to be delivered through a One-Stop system. The state expanded the scope of its Job Center Standards to include DOL core services (e.g., labor market information and job search training and assistance), thereby aligning the state and federal visions. The Job Center Standards, discussed more fully in a later section, have continued to evolve and shape the design framework for Wisconsin's One-Stop system, guiding local operations.

The One-Stop effort in the state of Wisconsin is perceived, above all else, as an organizational and structural means to the end of improved customer services. According to the One-Stop manager within Wisconsin's DILHR, the One-Stop system represents the infrastructure—a store with shelves, a loading dock, cash registers and such. At present, the contents of the shelves are defined by different state and local program initiatives, funding streams, and specified target groups (e.g., JTPA, local School-to-Work initiatives). Notwithstanding this metaphor, the state's conceptual framework for a local One-Stop system calls for a network consisting of:

- At least two full-service Job Centers in most SDAs;
- "Other staffed service locations" tied to Job Centers by various means (e.g., formal two-way referral, electronic communication linkages);
- "Self-service sites" at a variety of high traffic public access sites in the community; and
- An information technology infrastructure based on state-sponsored designs adapted to local needs.

According to the state's vision, no single agency or program will own or run any local Job Center. Rather, each Job Center is to be run by a consortium—a "partnership of equals"—that includes the four core partners at a minimum. Implicit in this rather broad design framework is the latitude for local discretion and the recognition of differences across local areas. Indeed, local flexibility and discretion are perceived as key design elements, facilitating responsiveness to local customer needs. Each local One-Stop center is encouraged to develop services and structures tailored to the needs of local employer and job seeker customers beyond the core services and within the state's functional framework using either co-location or a "no wrong-door" approach to coordinate among local partners and their programs. Local areas, however, have most often perceived co-location as a necessary (though not a sufficient) condition for efficient and effective Job Center operations.

Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

The state anticipates that the federal goal of the *Universality* of One-Stop services will be achieved as all employers and individuals come to view Job Centers as the vehicle of choice for all workforce development needs. While offering services to economically disadvantaged customers and other "target groups," the system will endeavor to avoid a "welfare-system" image. There is a difference of emphasis among different One-Stop partners, however, between making services available to the general public and developing services to meet the needs of specific target groups. According to the state's One-Stop vision and design, all customers will have access to a set of core services available free of charge, including access to *Job Net*, an automated listing of job openings, *Career Visions*, an automated career information delivery system, and resource libraries offering a broad range of print and multi-media materials providing labor market, career, and job information. Non-program-eligible customers may be required to pay for some services beyond a set of core services. Whereas fee-for-service arrangements are believed to be one strategy to make a wider range of services available to the general public, procedures for fee-based services are still in the early stages of development.

This was also the case in the local site visited. Therefore, although there is wide recognition that services in a One-Stop environment must be universally available, there is not yet a clear strategy for how to provide a broad range of services to individuals not eligible for specific categorical programs.

Customer Choice

Improved customer choice is one of the key goals of the state's One-Stop initiative. By allowing each local Job Center to design a service delivery system that is tailored to local needs, the state hopes to offer each customer a choice among attractive service options. The primary response to the federal One-Stop objective of *Customer Choice* has been the development of self-service as well as assisted service options. The state has taken the lead with respect to developing the infrastructure to support the former and provided guidance to local areas with respect to the latter. All partners agree that technology-driven, user-directed services such as automated job banks and career information software are essential to make services available to large numbers of employers and individuals. Both state and local respondents agree that the objective of both the technology-driven self-service options and assisted-service options is to increase the service choices available to One-Stop customers. However, while state One-Stop partners tend to emphasize the importance of the self-service systems as a key element of the One-Stop service delivery approach, local One-Stop partners in Waukesha perceived the "personal" assisted services provided by Job Center staff as the key to providing services responsive to customer needs.

Integrated Services

There is a clear desire to move toward *Integrated Services* in terms of service planning and delivery across workforce development programs. Indeed, this is a primary reason why the state has required local Job Centers to be operated by an interagency "partnership of equals" that, together, develops a plan for the design and delivery of services. At present, statewide One-Stop system integration in Wisconsin is built around the five common functions previously referenced (i.e., intake, assessment, case management, employer services, and planning). It is expected that partner agencies will minimize service duplication and maximize the resources available for customer service by sharing common service functions and infrastructures.

Although integration is a clear goal of the state's One-Stop system, in practice there is actually a *continuum of integration*, ranging from coordination among distinct programs, to consolidation of activities or services across programs. Without the implementation of federal block grants, it is believed that individual programs will maintain their own separate identities and complete integration of services will be unlikely. These beliefs were echoed at the local site visited. In the current multi-program and multi-funding stream environment, the local site visited for the evaluation had progressed to widespread "coordination" of functions across all program activities, but had stopped short of service integration.

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

At the present time, the *Job Center Standards* represent a primary mechanism through which the state is cultivating a performance-driven/outcome-based One-Stop system. This series of process standards, representing the culmination of several years of planning efforts, were developed by a state-local interagency team and were approved by the HRIC in February 1995. The standards describe the characteristics of a well-coordinated local employment and training service delivery system (*functional standards*) and identify the minimum menu of services that all Job Center sites are expected to provide on-site to a universal customer base that includes individuals and employers (*service standards*). Thus, the Job Center Standards consist of functional standards pertaining to *how* specific services are delivered, as well as service standards pertaining to *what* specific services are available. For example, one service standard is that testing and assessment be available to a universal customer base; one functional standard is that assessment be non-redundant across participating partners.

In order for a local area to be considered a One-Stop Job Center, it must be in conformance with the standards. A current priority for the state is field-testing an evaluation guide, developed in-house, in order to assess whether and to what extent local Job Centers are meeting their Job Center Standards.

In addition to the Job Center Standards themselves, the state's One-Stop design framework includes the expectation that information about processes, outcomes, and customer satisfaction will guide continuous improvement efforts and that such data will also be used to certify local One-Stop centers, generate incentive awards, and trigger other consequences. An extensive program of statewide customer-focused research targeted to samples of job-seeker customers, employer customers, and Wisconsin taxpayers is currently underway. The identification and measurement of quantitative outcome-oriented goals, however, is much more rudimentary in nature and represents a challenging area with which the state has just begun to deal. State respondents expressed a desire to develop *feasible* and *valid* outcome measures for the One-Stop system. However, partner agencies are approaching the issue of specific One-Stop outcome measures with caution and trepidation, borne perhaps of past experiences with numbers that are easily manipulated, quantitative measurements that actually possess minimal utility but which make for pithy sound-bites, and the strong belief that specific quantitative measurements are premature in a system that is very much in a stage of development. At the time of this writing, the state had procured a consultant to assist the One-Stop players in working through these and similar issues.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

The state has placed a high priority on capacity building and related projects to support Wisconsin's implementation of a statewide One-Stop system. The effort is supported by a three-year budget of more than $300,000 from the federal One-Stop implementation grant. As in other supportive initiatives and projects, DILHR's JETS Division is leading the effort and facilitating partner agency involvement on an interagency "Capacity Building Team," which has responsibility for assessing the training needs of all One-Stop partners and developing a training response. Currently, the state is approaching capacity building in a strategic manner, working toward establishing a capacity building *structure*.

The majority of work in this area has revolved around surveying state and local One-Stop actors to identify training needs. A recent survey identified *team building* and *customer service* as priority training areas for 1996. The state has also conducted surveys specifically targeted to local One-Stop actors to identify and develop a roster of training resources and to gain input regarding what local sites are doing to meet their "functional" Job Center Standards. The goal of these efforts is to complete a job/task analysis that will lead to the identification of key competencies of all local Job Center staff based on the functional standards with a SCANS overlay (e.g., identifying listening skills that are part of the intake process). An automated needs assessment tool has been developed for use by over 2000 local Job Center staff statewide. Results from the first assessment of Job Center staff will be used to develop curricula so that, in the near future, local One-Stop staff and managers would have access to a broad menu of training options and could register for training relevant to specific key competencies they would like to improve.

In terms of more immediate needs or specific technical assistance, "Local Liaisons" play a key role. Employed by DILHR to interface with local One-Stop actors, the two Local Liaisons are in a position to identify resources and assess immediate needs for assistance. This information is transmitted to the Capacity Building Team, which also provides "just-in-time" training when needed (e.g., conflict resolution training to help a local site deal with tensions among partners).

One-Stop respondents at the local site recognized the state's need to concentrate its energies on soliciting input and collecting various types of information in order to establish a foundation for future capacity building efforts. However, a conflict existed between planning for an ongoing capacity building structure and addressing the immediate needs of local areas during the early stages of One-Stop design and implementation.

Labor Market Information and Related Information Technology Improvements

State-level One-Stop actors view labor market information (LMI) and information technology (IT) from a highly comprehensive perspective, one that views IT as the infrastructure that supports the LMI content that drives both workforce development planning and individual customer service. According to this view, which is promoted by ALMIS (America's Labor Market Information System), LMI includes both general information about local education and career opportunities and data on individual labor market transactions (information on individual job seekers and available job openings). When viewed in this way, LMI improvement is actually the linchpin of the entire One-Stop system. State respondents generally believed it would be beneficial if LMI was viewed nationally as an integral part of the One-Stop initiative, rather than as an independent but related initiative.

An "intense" challenge for LMI-related initiatives in the context of a One-Stop service delivery system is the need to make products and technology useful and customer-friendly. One of the ways the state has responded is to modify or develop new products/technology to meet the needs of different types of customers (e.g., dislocated workers and dropouts). Despite these efforts, which have included a series of focus groups and the conduct of numerous customer surveys, system design is still a formidable issue, particularly in terms of accommodating systems to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, the general belief that "technology" will solve any and all difficult or menacing tasks places unrealistic expectations upon a system that is already reeling from a lack of national investment amidst demands from numerous layers of customers.

Two major information technology products support Wisconsin's vision of a One-Stop service delivery system: *Career Visions* and *JobNet*. *Career Visions* is the state's automated Career Information Delivery System (or CIDS), the major vehicle for the electronic delivery of self-service career exploration and decision-making information for individuals. It is a multimedia career exploration and information database accessed through a user interface produced by the University of Wisconsin, and consisting of three major databases (occupations, colleges and universities, and programs of study). This enjoyable and relatively easy to use system is perceived to be geared more for youth in grades 7 through12 than adults (the major market is the public school system). Although the state's original LMI grant was reduced, combining the available funding with Wisconsin's UI profiling grant allowed the state to implement Career Visions in 60 Job Centers or affiliated sites.

JobNet, developed in-house chiefly through ES Automation grants, provides job seekers with information on job openings submitted by employers. JobNet is a PC-based, self-service, touch-screen customer information system. Customers can register for services and obtain information on available local and state job openings. In actuality, JobNet is a primary means of retooling and reengineering Wisconsin's Job Service. The goal for JobNet installations is 72 sites by July 1996, with 45 sites achieved as of March 1996.

In addition to these two primary LMI products, which the federal One-Stop implementation grant is helping the state to "roll out" to local Job Centers, the federal One-Stop grants are also supporting additional Information Technology (IT) projects to further Wisconsin's vision of a statewide One-Stop system. One project is designed to develop a "universal menu of services" for all Job Centers. Called the "*Menu of Services Project*," the expectation is that individuals will be able to review, select, and automatically register for a locally programmed menu of services on-line. Current plans are to implement this project on a pilot basis using JobNet as the host system.

Among the planned capabilities of this system is the ability to assess initial eligibility for some services. The state plans to conduct an initial pilot of this project, and, if the customer response is positive, implement the menu of services approach statewide.

Another IT project is the establishment of information-sharing linkages across data systems, called the "*IT Blueprint Project.*" In the short-term, project completion will prevent the need for duplicative data entry and facilitate inter-program sharing of information to support the case management function. In the longer-term, the completed "blueprint" will guide state and local IT development to ensure state-local connectivity and compatibility while encouraging local refinements and innovations.

Further IT projects carried out with the federal LMI grants associated with One-Stop include the creation of an automated LMI data "warehouse" to allow easier access and manipulation of multiple LMI datasets by LMI staff. The Occupational Information System (OIS) will permit education and E&T program planners to compile information from multiple sources on labor shortages and surpluses and show the relationships between educational preparation and occupations.

Marketing

Marketing is viewed as critical to the success of the One-Stop initiative—marketing to individual job seekers, the general public and, particularly, employers. Consistent with the model of strong state leadership with local flexibility, the state believes that the most effective marketing will be conducted at the local level. To support local marketing efforts, the state is planning to prepare marketing materials on a statewide basis. However, progress in developing marketing materials was delayed due to an unexpected loss of communications staff within DILHR and the omnipresence of more pressing priorities among other DILHR One-Stop staff. As a result of these factors, One-Stop marketing efforts—however crucial—made little headway during the first year of the implementation grant. State plans call for increased marketing activities during the second year, as more local One-Stop systems become more widespread.

Numerous other statewide initiatives—such as the state's welfare reform proposal and the School-to-Work initiative—led other DILHR divisions and other agencies and departments to move forward with their own workforce development marketing plans, which would have resulted in parallel marketing efforts to employers and workers. Recognizing the importance of a coordinated marketing effort for the One-Stop system, an Interagency Guidance Team on Marketing was formed and, at the time of the site visit, the Marketing Team was in the process of securing a marketing consultant so that all of the One-Stop partner agencies and programs could focus on marketing the workforce development system as a whole. A statewide workforce development marketing plan was expected by March 1, 1996.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

The state of Wisconsin is clearly moving forward rapidly in its attempts to implement a One-Stop service delivery system. Rather than phasing in One-Stop planning and implementation a few local areas at a time, the state is moving forward on the development of an extended network of 62 Job Center sites simultaneously. Progress is being made in numerous areas, from cultivating an extensive range of state and local partnerships, to broad-based customer research. It is also apparent, however, that the state is behind its initial proposed timetable in several areas. For instance, the two primary information technology projects are both behind schedule, accounting, in part, for the level of underexpenditure of the implementation grant. In addition, implementation of DOL's Cost Allocation TAG has been pushed back, as have final recommendations on local governance structural arrangements. The state's original objective of having all local sites meet the *Job Center Standards* was originally scheduled to be achieved by December 1997. Achievement of this objective has now been scheduled for June 1998. The delay in many areas is probably something to be expected, given the massive organizational changes that are occurring at the state level among the One-Stop partner agencies. Such large-scale organizational change often takes longer than key actors initially expect, in part because much takes place that was not, and probably could not, have been anticipated.

INFLUENCES ON STATE DESIGN

Notwithstanding the key contextual factors mentioned in the first section of this profile, other influences have also affected One-Stop design, implementation, and progress in the state of Wisconsin. Wisconsin has a long history of collaboration and years of experimentation with precursors of the One-Stop initiative that have served the state well in its present efforts. The substantial involvement of numerous state agencies and local-level partners has clearly supported statewide efforts and helped to establish broad-based commitment for the consolidation of workforce development programs and services.

Another primary factor that has facilitated One-Stop progress and implementation is Wisconsin's strong economy. Low unemployment and widespread labor shortages have created a climate conducive to experimentation and heavy employer involvement. For example, the current job search assistance practice of making employer job orders available to the general public (i.e., unsuppressed job orders through JobNet) and minimizing applicant pre-screening may not be as acceptable to employers when the job market is not as tight.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

In summary, the Wisconson approach to One-Stop design and implementation is characterized by several features, including: (1) strong state leadership to create a coordinated infrastructure and guide the development of local One-Stop systems, with substantial room for local variation in the organization, design, and delivery of One-Stop services; (2) a planned strong integration of welfare-to-work initiatives into the One-Stop system; (3) a vision of tiered services offering Wisconsin residents a range from self-service delivery, to guided services, to case managed services; (4) an approach to One-Stop service delivery that currently emphasizes coordination among disparate funding streams, but which may move rapidly toward integration of services after federal block grant legislation is passed; (5) a strong interest in gaining active employer involvement in One-Stop services and basing system design on ongoing measurements of customer needs and desires; and (6) an organizational structure that emphasizes a consortium of equal agency partners and structures for interagency participation in planning and governance at both the state and local levels.

Wisconsin offers many lessons and, given the benefit of hindsight, perhaps much that would have been done differently. One of the most difficult lessons learned involves the case of local governance. It is widely accepted that the ideal situation would have been to design local governing structures in advance of initial One-Stop planning and implementation. It is to its advantage that the state has historically enjoyed a substantial level of involvement and commitment across state and local agencies, which will probably serve to ameliorate at least some of the discomfort inherent in the formidable process of establishing local boards.

The involvement of as broad a range of state agencies as possible has been both challenging and facilitative of Wisconsin's progress. Despite different missions, cultures, and perspectives, a focus on common interests has helped partner agencies move beyond their differences to focus on a collective goal. Whereas it takes little effort to focus on differences (e.g., one agency serves "veterans," another serves "individuals with disabilities," yet another serves "economically disadvantaged"), the common focus was the establishment of a system to serve *customers* through a unified system. Although working with so many different partners continues to offer many challenges, this common focus has emerged as the foundation for agency rapport and the initiation of a team approach.

The state of Wisconsin is still struggling with developing its One-Stop system and will probably continue to do so. Despite undeniable progress, it is in a formative stage of development. Perhaps the experience of Wisconsin, well-known as a leader in these efforts, is instructive in that it cautions various stakeholders to temper expectations with the unmistakable reality that cultural change is a long-term process.

APPENDIX W

WAUKESHA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
PEWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
One-Stop Profile

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During December 1995

WAUKESHA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
One-Stop Profile

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WAUKESHA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
One-Stop Profile

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Waukesha County Workforce Development Center ("WDC" or "Center") opened its doors in January 1995, after an intensive two-year planning process. The Center is located on the campus of the Waukesha County Technical College in the city of Pewaukee. Waukesha County is part of a three-county One-Stop planning unit called the "WOW" SDA because it is comprised of three counties: Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington. Each of the three counties has a local One-Stop center. Waukesha County is the largest of the three counties, with several population centers and a range of suburban, urban, and rural areas.

Key partner agencies, each representing major funding streams, had been working collaboratively for several years prior to the opening of the Center. JTPA/Title III experiences were credited as providing the opportunity for some of the initial forays into coordinated service delivery (e.g., through rapid response teams that included participation from a number of different local agencies). What has emerged as the Workforce Development Center is the product of several years of discussions among key staff from the participating local partners, including the Wisconsin Job Service, the WOW Private Industry Council, the Waukesha County Technical College, the Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services, the Wauksha County Economic Development Corporation, and Partners for Education, Inc. The active involvement of the County Executive is also credited with providing the leadership that helped the participating partners see beyond their individual concerns to a common mission and customer service approach.

The vision of the Workforce Development Center is believed to be inherent in its name. Although most local One-Stop sites within the state of Wisconsin call themselves "Job Centers," partner agencies in Waukesha County prefer this designation, perceived to be indicative of a more comprehensive view, as enumerated in its mission statement:

> *The purpose of the Workforce Development Center is to advance the economic well-being of the region by developing and maintaining a quality workforce and by serving as the focal point for local and regional workforce development initiatives. This is to be achieved through the co-location and integration of employment, training, education, and economic development services for job seekers, workers and employers.*

Waukesha County is the fastest growing county in the state of Wisconsin, experiencing one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation, as well as fiercely swift business expansion. Due to this rapid economic growth, employers are projected to have a continuing problem with an adequate supply of entry-level and skilled workers. Indeed, local fast-food establishments have offered health benefits in order to attract workers. This economic environment offers many opportunities for partner agencies (e.g., employer interest in and support for workforce development activities), as well as challenges (e.g., the lack of a public transportation system to support access to county jobs by workers from the central city of Milwaukee).

In addition to the local economy, the state's proposed realignment of SDA boundaries from 17 to possibly 10 is a key contextual variable offering both challenge and opportunity. Local One-Stop actors believe that the proposed realignment of planning units will transform the current three-county SDA into a four-county SDA that would include neighboring Milwaukee. There is some concern that Milwaukee, which is much larger and more economically and socially diverse, will overshadow the three counties that currently comprise the WOW SDA. Thus, although it is recognized that Milwaukee offers many advantages to Waukesha County (e.g., source of labor), and that coordinated efforts are in the best interests of both counties (e.g., realizing the potential for creating an integrated labor market by linking Milwaukee's surplus of job seekers with WOW's surplus of unfilled jobs), there is some tension around consolidating the local workforce planning unit with Milwaukee County.

The prospective block-granting of federal workforce development programs continues to influence local progress toward a fully integrated service delivery system. Local actors actually believed that block grants would have been in place by this time, facilitating movement toward their vision of the Workforce Development Center as a *business*, with each of the partner agencies as "departments" within a company. However, the current reality of different funding streams with different restrictions and requirements is perceived as mitigating against the achievement of true integration and the ultimate realization of the local vision, concerns that were echoed by state-level representatives as well.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

As required by the state, the Workforce Development Center has a *Local Collaborative Planning Team* (LCPT) guiding One-Stop planning and implementation, similar in structure and function to the State Collaborative Planning Team. Membership on the LCPT consists of the four state-required "core" partner agencies—the local Job Service, JTPA PIC, JOBS administrative entity, and the local Technical College. The LCPT has responsibility over the entire three-county SDA, of which Waukesha is a part. Partner agencies believe that the LCPT represents a true partnership between agencies focused on the common mission of workforce development.

The state's planned framework for local Job Center governance revolves around the establishment of local *Human Resource Investment Boards* (HRIBs). This proposed structure has emerged as a politically-charged issue, perhaps because these local governing bodies are being planned *after* the establishment of the LCPT and the actual development of local centers such as the WDC. Representatives from local partner agencies are vehemently opposed to what is perceived as the imposition of another layer of government and bureaucracy and are concerned with the potential destabilizing effect this mandated structure may have on the current collaborative process that has emerged and evolved and that partners believe has worked exceptionally well. Currently, the state's plans for the establishment of HRIBs have been postponed until late spring 1996 (or after the passage of federal block grant legislation).

Currently, the day-to-day operation of the WDC is overseen by a *Management Team* consisting of top-level representatives from six of the key partner agencies (listed below). It was established nearly two years prior to the opening of the WDC to enable key players to negotiate the mechanics of a workforce development center that was to be based on customers and founded on agency partnerships. The Management Team is currently responsible for the ongoing operation of the Center, with decisions made on a consensus basis. By all accounts, this is a highly effective team. It is not surprising that this administrative arrangement is perceived by local actors to be a key part of the local governance structure. Indeed, local actors believe that the Management Team at the WDC functions as an HRIB, although it is currently not an incorporated entity.

Although there is no "lead agency" responsible for managing the Workforce Development Center, joint Center funds (provided for in the lease payments made by each participating partner) are used to support a full-time Center Manager and portions of the salaries of other staff, whose efforts support the operation of the Center as an entity. The Center Manager, who had only been in her position for a short period prior to the site visit, views her role as facilitating and urging Center partners toward increasing unification and consolidation of their functions over time. As she described it, "The Center partners have "gotten married." It's my job to help them realize what comes after the wedding to build and maintain a strong marriage."

There are nine local agency partners currently involved in the Workforce Development Center as listed below. Each has a physical presence at the Center.[1]

- *Wisconsin Job Service*, which provides ES services to the general public, including UI claimants.
- *WOW Private Industry Council*, which is responsible for administering services under JTPA Title II and Title III, which it provides through contracts to several service providers, who are also co-located at the Center.
- *Waukesha County Department of Health & Human Services*, which has located not only its contractors for the JOBS program for AFDC recipients and the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program at the Center, but also the entire county income maintenance staff that provide economic assistance to "able-bodied" county residents.
- *Waukesha County Technical College*, which provides a wide range of education and occupational training programs to students, assessment services and career exploration to individual WDC customers through an on-site Community Career Center, as well as customized training services to local employers.
- *Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation*, which is a private non-profit organization focused on attracting and retaining companies in the county.
- *Partners for Education, Inc.*, which is a private non-profit organization created by local school districts with the objective of developing and cultivating linkages between K-12 education and local businesses.

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[1] The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, although not part of the initial planning process, is slated to come on board as an additional co-located partner agency.

The following three partner agencies are contracted to provide specialized services to targeted populations:

- *Kaiser Group, Inc.* is a private for-profit contractor providing case management and customer services to targeted populations (JTPA, JOBS and FSE&T). This provider was selected through a competitive RFP issued jointly by the PIC and the County Department of Health and Human Services for the JTPA, JOBS, and FSE&T programs.
- *LaCasa de Esperanza* is a CBO that works with non-English speaking customers, offering a variety of case management and customer services to targeted populations. This provider was also selected through a joint RFP process.
- *AFL-CIO* is contracted to provide specialized services to dislocated workers.

In summary, the partnership developed for the Waukesha Workforce Development Center is distinguished by: (1) the consensus-oriented model for Center management and the lack of any designated lead agency; (2) the strong lead role played by the local Economic Development Corporation in unifying outreach to and encouraging active participation by local employers; (3) a strong local emphasis on the importance of involving the K-12 schools in efforts to provide a well-trained workforce for the future; and (4) the integration of the economic assistance function within the Center while avoiding a "welfare" mentality or image and emphasizing employment for customers as the mission that unifies all project partners.

As stated in a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed by the partner agencies nearly two years before the facility was operational, each agency agreed to take the lead on a different specialized function within the Center. This agreement has fostered a sense of cohesion and partnership, while acknowledging and capitalizing on specific expertise and minimizing duplicative efforts. For instance, the Job Service agreed to take the lead on staffing the self-service job information, the reception area, and the "job order services" unit. The PIC agreed to take the lead on a variety of administrative services, including the development of common computer information systems. The PIC also acts as the fiscal agent for the local One-Stop implementation grant. The Waukesha County Technical College agreed to take the lead on facilities management as well as the provision of career assessment services. The County Department of Health and Human Services was the obvious agency to lead the coordination of services to able-bodied public assistance recipients. Likewise, the

Economic Development Corporation naturally was the agency to coordinate business development services to county firms.

As a result of this agreement, partner agencies perceive collaborative efforts to build on the strengths of each agency and to naturally "feed off of each other." This spirit of collaboration and cooperation has perhaps been fostered by the lengthy period of negotiation and detailed planning that involved all levels of staff from the partner agencies and that took place *before* co-location actually occurred. The opening of the Center represented the achievement of a common goal, despite differing agency cultures, missions and perspectives.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Formal communication and coordination mechanisms in place at the Workforce Development Center include a variety of multi-agency committees, workgroups and teams, each with responsibility for specific areas and functions, and each open to all levels of partner agency staff (with the exception of the Management Team). For instance, the Integrated Services to Job Seekers Committee is concerned with issues and challenges regarding services to individual customers. Similarly, the Integrated Services to Employers Steering Committee is concerned with services to employer customers. In most cases, each of the Center's committees and teams were established one or two years *before* the Center was opened. Therefore, these formal mechanisms not only enhanced communication and coordination, but allowed partner agency staff to build trust and experience working together as a team. In addition, because the issues and challenges that were originally faced by the various groups have necessarily changed and evolved, so have the responsibilities of each of the teams. For instance, the Building Environment Committee, originally established to decide on such matters as color schemes and furnishings, has evolved into the Building Operations Committee, now charged with the responsibility of ensuring a comfortable work environment within the Center.

In addition, the co-location of staff from numerous agencies, by its very nature, enhances communication. This was, in fact, a primary reason why initial plans for a center placed co-location at a premium. The belief that there is no substitute for face-to-face interaction was echoed repeatedly by all levels of partner agency staff. Case managers, for instance, believed that the ability to "walk over" to someone from a different agency enabled them to be more responsive to customer needs. Heads of local agency partners, who might have been located "a few miles" from other partner agencies before the Center was built, expressed the tremendous difference co-location has had on the efficiency and effectiveness of their organization. To support their physical proximity, one of the first tasks the Center workgroup on MIS undertook was to develop common automated systems for the exchange of electronic mail and sharing of individual staff schedules and conference room schedules among all Center staff, regardless of specific agency affiliation.

Other mechanisms and procedures to enhance communication and coordination across local agency partners include the cross-training of staff in various areas (e.g., information technology) regularly scheduled inter-agency meetings, and a monthly WDC newsletter that gives all Center staff information on activities that have taken place or plans for the near future.

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING AND FISCAL ISSUES

The Workforce Development Center was built with funds from the county and the local Technical College, demonstrating the commitment of key partner agencies to the One-Stop concept, which included co-location as a basic premise. The total cost of the new facility was $2.3M. Because different agency rules and requirements precluded building ownership by any of the contributing partners, and because all partner agencies wanted to be "equal" in the building (with no specific partner owning it), it was determined during initial planning stages that each partner agency would hold separate leases with a "neutral" owner. The Technical College Foundation Board was chosen to have "ownership without risk and without return."[2]

Aside from the lease agreement to which each participating partner makes a monthly contribution that supports the costs of operating the shared physical facility and the Center Manager position, the Center has few joint sources of funding. Exceptions include the local One-Stop implementation grant provided through the State to support local One-Stop implementation progress and a One-Stop Local Learning Laboratory grant (which is shared by both the WOW and Milwaukee SDAs). The

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[2] The Waukesha County Technical College, which is a key local partner, is a separate entity from the Technical College Foundation.

JTPA Private Industry Council has responsibility for all funds coming through the Center and is the fiscal agent for the local One-Stop grant.[3]

Notwithstanding these joint funding sources, there are five major federal workforce development funding streams represented by the Center partners: Wagner-Peyser, JOBS, JTPA, Adult Basic Education, and Carl Perkins. A number of the project partners also manage activities involving additional federal, state, or local funding streams (for example, the Technical College operates extensive educational, technical training, and business assistance programs beyond its role as the local agency responsible for Adult Basic Education and Carl Perkins funding). At the present time, each partner agency maintains its own budget. There are currently no written financial agreements between the partners.

From a fiscal perspective, the Center operates like nine different companies—each with its own lease and its own budget. In general, the partner agencies contract with one another for specific services. Few costs are *Center* costs. Therefore, it is difficult to discern the exact overall costs involved in maintaining the Center. Although this is contrary to the local One-Stop vision, which is predicated in part upon the Center operating as *one business* with nine different departments, the integration of funding at the level of service delivery in the current multi-program environment is not perceived as prudent or realistic. Therefore, although partner agencies clearly coordinate in terms of the planning and delivery of specific services (e.g., workshops), partner agency funds are not co-mingled.

DESIGN OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP INITIATIVE

Evolution and General Description of Local Design

As previously described, general principles guiding the design of the Workforce Development Center included co-location, equal partnership, complementarity of partner agency roles, and the decision to promote the *functional integration* of staff from a variety of agency partners. Rather than viewing the Center in terms of the program priorities of the individual partners, which vary in terms of target populations and available services, the new Center vision depends on viewing the needs of the customers as the starting point, and enabling individual customers to navigate the multi-agency system to access comprehensive services responsive to their needs.

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[3] At the time of this writing, the local One-Stop grant expenditure rate for the WOW SDA was approximately 60%, with the expenditure rate in Waukesha County reportedly higher due chiefly to the cost of new equipment.

The One-Stop vision promoted by the Center Manager consists of coordinating existing services to meet customer needs, or as she expressed it, "wrapping the services around the customer." Customer-responsive service design and delivery are intended to go several steps beyond coordination of existing services to include the coordinated development and implementation of new workforce development services to meet identified service gaps. For example, the Center Manager was very enthusiastic about the progress made by Center partners as a group to address the need expressed by local businesses for a pool of qualified apprenticeship applicants.

Relevance of the Local Design to the Four Federal Goals

Universal Access

The Workforce Development Center is conveniently located on the Technical College campus, which is near a major interstate and served by public transportation. According to the local design framework, the Center itself is the place of activity, although some services might be accessed off-site (e.g., classroom training at the Technical College). Whereas unstaffed access points are planned for the future, they are currently not a part of local design due primarily to cost considerations. The vision is that the Workforce Development Center will be the "hub of the wheel, with kiosks being the spokes."

Local One-Stop actors expect the Center to be viewed as a professional entity dedicated to comprehensive, high-quality workforce development needs for all individuals and employers, rather than as a "human services agency" that portrays a "welfare image." Indeed, this stance was one of the catalysts for including Economic Development as a key partner.

However, one challenge with which project partners are grappling with respect to achieving the federal objective of *Universality* is how to make a broad range of services available to the general public, given that a number of the federal funding streams managed by project partners are targeted to specific groups. Although all One-Stop customers can access services such as JobNet and Career Visions and can obtain career assessment services, more intensive services are often reserved for individuals eligible for categorical programs. One response to this challenge has been the exploration of fee-based services. Another has been to share information when there is unused space available in various workshops and sessions offered by a given agency.

Customer Choice

Local respondents generally agreed that technology-driven user-directed services such as automated job banks (*JobNet*) and career information software (*Career Visions*) are important strategies to make services available to large numbers of customers. Both databases can be accessed in person (evening and weekend hours are available) or by personal computer. However, local respondents do not perceive self-service automated information systems as the only means by which the local One-Stop Center is responsive to individual and employer needs. Rather, "personal" services provided by staff were also considered crucial. Several case managers and customers described the "key feature" of responsive services as guiding the customer through the system and helping to enhance customer self-esteem by treating all customers with respect and offering them encouragement to pursue their employment goals.

Integrated Services

Integration of services at the WDC is predicated upon the co-location of partner agencies, the specialization of different project partners, and the "functional integration" of agency staff, so that staff are situated in the building by function (e.g., job placement), and not by agency. However, although customers are encouraged to make use of all relevant services available in the Center, the realities of categorical program funding and accountability continue to reinforce the delivery of distinct services by each agency and a perspective within each participating program of concern about "*my* statistics, *my* numbers, and *my* people." Thus, the current situation in the Waukesha County Workforce Development Center would more accurately be described as coordination, rather than integration of services.

One of the key issues surrounding this federal objective is what is perceived by local respondents as an unrealistic federal view of what integrated services should mean in a One-Stop system. This is an issue approached with both concern and trepidation. Local players voiced the concern that if the federal objective is "taken too far," it could mean that the diversity in viewpoints and perspectives each of the partners brings to the One-Stop effort may be lost. Respondents also expressed a concern that integrated services may be inappropriately perceived as a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

Thus, for example, from the perspective of these local actors, it is not problematic that there are currently three agencies at the Center providing resume services. Although seemingly duplicative and not "integrated," integration is not perceived as a valid objective in this instance "because it depends on the end user." Individuals may need more intensive or less intensive services, so that importance is placed upon agency *coordination* with respect to resume services. It is believed that, in a customer-oriented service delivery system where the customer comes first and where vastly different populations receive a range of services, it should be possible to have different agencies providing similar services.

Thus, in actual practice, there appears to be a *continuum of integration*. Although there are some functional areas in which Center partners continue to operate similar or "parallel" activities (e.g., there are multiple procedures for intake, job listings, and job search/job placement services among the Center partners), in a number of functional areas, customers are referred to a project partner that specializes in these services. For example, three different levels of career assessments are available to a wide range of customers through WDC's Community Career Center operated by the Technical College with support from multiple funding sources, and most customers use the automated JobNet listings maintained by Job Service (although the Technical College still operates its own job listing service for employers who prefer to use this system). Integration of services to "targeted populations" has been furthered by the use of a "joint RFP process" to contract for the delivery of services to JTPA, JOBS, and Food Stamp Employment and Training Program participants. (Once the contracts were awarded, however, the primary contractor established separate case management staff to serve the participants in JOBS versus JTPA programs.)

Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based

Partner agencies agree that the local One-Stop system should be driven by customer feedback and continuous improvement. Local efforts to measure Center performance, however, are in their infancy. In terms of quantitative measures, notwithstanding individual program accountability requirements (e.g., placement rates for JTPA), partner agencies have difficulty even compiling "utilization" numbers for the Center as a whole. In addition, the local Center partners have not yet developed an approach to analyzing and using these data. A variety of efforts are underway to measure customer satisfaction using individual- and employer-focused surveys. Some of these seek information on the customer response to specific services and activities, while others are more geared toward assessing the overall Center experience.

In general, however, local actors are struggling with performance measurement in a local One-Stop system that brings together numerous partners and populations with varying kinds and levels of expectations. Present efforts are concentrated on collecting data on numerous aspects of the Center's design and delivery of services. The recent formation of the *Data Collection Committee* is testimony to the growing awareness that information-gathering should be designed to capture useful information that can be used for continuous feedback and improvement.

Local One-Stop players believe that performance measurement within a One-Stop context should be predicated upon the ability to measure *system* performance (i.e., Center performance as a whole) and, ultimately, financial savings—a viewpoint also expressed by state-level actors. At the present time, however, different requirements for different programs are perceived as problematic. Local actors also voiced concerns about how performance data might be used to compare local areas that operate in very different contexts.

Physical Facilities

According to local actors, the building itself is important to the goals of the Center—"what it looks like, where it is, and how it's marketed." Many factors were considered in selecting the site and designing the WDC. Chief among these were proximity to the interstate highway, accessibility to Waukesha County employers and residents, visibility, and a positive image. The Center was designed to meet the needs of all Center partners, with all design decisions based on consensus.

The Center has two main entrances. The Business Services Entrance, for employer customers, is staffed by an employee of the Economic Development Corporation. The entrance for individual customers is staffed by a Job Service employee. Neither entrance looks like the "back" of the building. This decision was based on the desire to make each type of customer feel comfortable and perceive that the Center was designed "for them."

In addition to the reception areas, the building contains shared classroom space for training and group activities, a "Job Information Center," which houses labor exchange information, a "Community Career Center," which contains a variety of career exploration tools, a child care facility for use by parents visiting the Center, space for employer interviews and seminars, common staff meeting rooms, a small lunchroom, and space jointly used for mailing, copying, and other administrative functions. Individual work stations are arranged on a *functional* basis so that staff from various agencies can work together on similar tasks. Although much attention has apparently been paid to detail (e.g, including attractive business-like furniture and decor and motivational quotations on wall decorations and computer "mouse" pads), it is generally agreed that space is somewhat tight. Partner agencies built a facility that met their current needs. Additional space was not provided to encourage expanded use by local agencies or programs not housed at the Center. Space limitations may become more of an issue in the future as the Center expands its menu of on-site services.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Staffing Arrangements

More than 100 individuals staff the Workforce Development Center. Staff are situated in the building based upon function, so that "case management" staff are located in the same area, regardless of agency affiliation. One of the initial concerns for local partners was the fact that salary and benefit scales might be markedly different for individuals employed by separate agencies but working in a similar capacity at the Center. Although initially a source of concern for staff carrying out a given function, local respondents indicated that this issue "has receded a lot." Despite the heightened awareness of different personnel policies, wages, and benefits, the morale among staff working at the Center is high due to the collaborative environment and the increased "community spirit" across partner agencies. One agency manager remarked that, "after staff come here, they don't want to leave."

Local actors believe that the WDC is a "listening and learning organization" that is in a state of evolution. It appears that local actors are building upon each other's strengths so that, as remarked by one agency representative, "As a result of being aware of each other, we're becoming more generalists in our awareness but more specialized in what we do."

Capacity Building

Particular emphasis has been placed on the cross-training of all WDC staff in areas that include teambuilding, customer service, as well as technical training in information technologies. Many of these locally-initiated efforts took place *before* the Center was operational. For example, prior to Center opening, two retreats were attended by all levels of partner agency staff. According to respondents, these were invaluable teambuilding experiences and, especially in the case of early efforts, helped to dispel a great deal of "agency baggage" concerning turf issues.

Although external trainers have been contracted in the past and are expected to be consulted in the future, in general, partner agencies currently rely on internal resources for capacity building and training needs. For instance, both before and after the Center was opened, staff from each of the partner agencies organized presentations and informational training sessions for the other agencies. These efforts facilitated the involvement of all levels of agency staff and allowed local actors to focus on similarities as well as areas of expertise. In addition, specialized training takes place, particularly involving the use of the technology available at the Center.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

Coordination and consolidation of the information systems used by all partner agencies remains one of the most important local implementation challenges facing the WDC. Lead responsibility for projects relating to MIS development for the Center was assigned to the Private Industry Council. Projects identified as highest priority include: (1) systems to facilitate day-to-day communication among partner agencies; (2) development of a shared file of information on local employers; and (3) development of a shared system to capture information on individual participants.

To promote day-to-day communication among staff within the WDC, two initiatives have been undertaken. The first initiative was to establish a common electronic mail and on-line scheduling system (allowing all Center staff to access each others' daily schedules and to reserve conference rooms) so staff could "act like and feel like one organization, or at least a number of organizations with the same goal." The second initiative was to help agencies that used mainframe-based MIS systems equip all Center-based staff with PC's that could both "emulate" dumb terminals to access their agency's mainframe computer and give them access to the PC-based communications network within the Center.

To develop a common data base on employers, the Center undertook the development of a "comprehensive employer file." This is an interactive, user-friendly, PC-based system that tracks all contacts with area employers. System design, which took into account individual agency needs, took approximately one year and was completed before the Center was operational. Information on employers can be printed based upon several options, including, for example, all employers contacted within a specific timeframe or by a particular agency staff. The system is believed to be essential in supporting coordination of employer contacts among Center partners. With the help of this system, the partner agencies have established an informal "account" system, with a single Center staff assigned as the official "account representative" for each employer.

The area with which local actors have struggled the most is how to collect or share common information about individual program participants. Currently still in the planning stage, a shared information system is under development that would capture basic information on participant demographics and services received in a user-friendly, menu-driven manner. Initial registration in the system would be accomplished by customers who would be able to peruse an on-line menu of service offerings and indicate interest in specific services using PCs installed in the lobby.

Center partners are not attempting to design a common MIS system that would replace their own individual record-keeping requirements. Individual agency MIS requirements are perceived to be too diverse to consolidate. For example, one agency requires 24 different screens of participant information, whereas another requires 5 screens. Instead, the Center is developing a tracking system to capture a few "core" measures that different programs collect in common and that could be used to generate broad statistics about participants and the services they use. Each participating partner is expected to collect additional data based on its own reporting requirements. Local actors believe this to be the most prudent approach until federal and state reporting requirements are integrated across programs.

Labor Market Information and Related Improvements

The WDC has integrated the state's automated labor market information tools (JobNet and Career Visions) into two staffed labor market information centers within the Center. Labor Market Information is available through the WDC's "Job Information Center" (JIC) and "Community Career Center" (CCC). The JIC currently contains 12 terminals for individuals interested in searching on-line for a local, state, or national job through *JobNet*, the state's on-line job posting/labor exchange system. The Job Information Center also contains a number of publications with labor market information in print format as well, including state-developed occupational and wage surveys tailored to specific regions. WDC staff are available to assist customers in accessing labor market information. In addition, a state-employed labor market analyst works at the Center one day per week.

The CCC has the look and feel of a library and is home to a bank of PC's on which individuals can use *Career Visions*, the state's on-line career exploration system, in addition to variety of additional software, some on CD-ROM with both video and sound capability. There are also numerous career and occupational reference books, some of which are geared for specific populations (e.g., youth); information on four-year colleges; and over 100 videotapes on various occupations. Also available is an on-line program that customers can use to access information about the performance of Technical College programs (including wage rates of graduates and placement rates). At least one staff person is always available to serve walk-in customers. Because the materials at the CCC are continually expanding, a current priority is the development of an inventory that can be used by internal staff and distributed to local schools.

Automated labor market information is also available to customers from a distance using Internet linkages. The feasibility of cable linkages to schools are also being explored as a way to make the resources of the Center available to a broader audience.

- **Marketing**

Marketing efforts at the Center are guided by a multi-agency Marketing Committee. Based on the local One-Stop implementation grant, the marketing budget for the WOW SDA is $41,000, of which Waukesha County receives 78%. This does not include, however, efforts initiated by specific partner agencies that support local efforts (e.g., this budget does not include the marketing budget for the Technical College).

Marketing was relatively low-key before and shortly after the Center was opened, reflecting local partners' caution and perhaps uncertainty about the level of demand for Center services. Initial priorities included the development of a logo for the Center that was acceptable to all partners. Local actors believed it was important for all staff to be able to distribute business cards portraying a single identity when the Center officially opened. *The Workforce Development Center: Where People and Jobs Connect* is prominently displayed throughout the Center, as well as included on stationery and "badges" that are worn by all staff. In addition to the logo, initial marketing priorities included the development of a brochure and a videotape describing the Center in the words of key staff from all partner agencies.

To date, marketing efforts have been broad-based and focused on both individuals and employers. This reflects, in part, the newness of the Center and the need to establish some kind of foundation within the county. However, there have also been some targeted efforts, many of which have been both resourceful and positive in outcome. When the Center opened, for instance, partner agencies used the Center's letterhead to contact all area Chambers of Commerce in writing to solicit input and ideas pertaining to a flag for the Center. This generated a number of questions about the Center, which was part of the original intent.

It is expected that marketing efforts will be more specialized and focused during the first half of 1996, with 75% of WDC marketing funds being targeted to individual job seekers. Local actors are poised for a media campaign that will include billboard and mail advertising, Career Expos, job fairs, on-site recruitment, and the sponsorship of Center tours. The substantial increase in marketing activity is driven by the severe labor shortage in Waukesha County and the consequent need to recruit individual job seekers. However, it is also the case that the partner agencies have now established a track record working together and are more comfortable promoting the Center and its services.

DELIVERY OF ONE-STOP SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS

Services for Individual Customers

The Workforce Development Center offers a broad range of on-site services to individual customers. Service coordination, as well as the initiation of new services is the responsibility of the multi-agency *Integrated Services to Job Seekers Committee*. Services currently available to all job seeker/worker customers include:

- *Computerized listings of local, state, and national job openings and other labor market information*, provided through the Center's Job Information Center, staffed by the Wisconsin Job Service (described in the section on Labor Market Information and Related Improvements).
- *Career information, including information about occupations and training resources and information about the performance of specific programs*, provided through the Center's Community Career Center, staffed by the Technical College.
- *Assessment and interpretation of basic educational skills, vocational interests, and occupational aptitudes*, provided through the Center's Community Career Center. As the agreed-upon partner responsible for assessment services (selected through a joint RFP process), the

Technical College offers three different levels of assessment to different customer groups including the general population, JTPA clients, JOBS clients, and at-risk youth.

- *On-site child care*, staffed by the local YWCA and funded through a subcontract with one of the service provider partners at the Center, available to Center customers for up to 2.5 hours at a time.
- *Job placement and job search assistance*, which is available through a number of different agencies and programs, including Job Service, the Technical College System, and contracted providers for individuals enrolled in categorical programs, such as JOBS and JTPA. The level of assistance and the intensity of these services vary substantially from source to source. Each provider makes an effort to share its resources with other agencies on a space available basis.
- *Information and referral to other needed service*, through distribution of information about services available from other community agencies.

Services available to individual job seekers based on their eligibility for special program funding include:

- *Financial assistance*, provided on-site by staff from the Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services to "able-bodied" residents eligible for AFDC, medical assistance, and/or Food Stamps.
- *Education or job training/retraining support and assistance*, available to individuals eligible for the JTPA or JOBS programs through contracted service providers housed at the Center, through the Technical College, or through other community educational institutions.
- *Veterans' services*, including job counseling and assistance available from special veterans' staff within the Job Service.
- *Case management services*, available to individuals enrolled in categorical education and training programs such as JTPA and JOBS.

Individual Center customers are informed about the range of available services upon arrival to the WDC. Local actors believe that the menu and quality of individual services are continuing to improve and evolve within the One-Stop context. One area that holds much potential, for instance, is collaboration of Center partners in the design and delivery of various on-site workshops. For instance, local partners recently designed an evening workshop for students and their parents on career planning, based on the belief that parents are the primary influence on students' career planning. Called "Parents-as-Partners," this workshop has received high praise, and there are currently waiting lists to attend. These and other locally-developed workshops and seminars appear to hold great promise for the future of the Center.

Local actors would like to view each individual seeking services at the Center as a "customer" without regard to eligibility for a particular program. The reality of specific funding streams for specific populations, in addition to shrinking funds in general, has made this viewpoint appear somewhat unrealistic, however, so that providing comprehensive services to the general public has emerged as a key issue. Although various short-term options have been exploited (e.g., not precluding individuals from attending on-site workshops for targeted groups when space is available), local actors are exploring the possibility of fee-for-service arrangements as a longer-term response. Currently, the only fee-based service for individuals at the Center is resume preparation. During 1996, partner agencies plan to survey individuals receiving services from the Center regarding the price at which they would be willing to pay for specific services.

Services for Employer Customers

Several committees guide the development and delivery of the Center's services for employer customers, most notably the *Integrated Services to Employers Steering Committee*, comprised of partner agency representatives that meet regularly, and the *Employer Advisory Committee*, comprised chiefly of representatives from area employers, which currently meets on a quarterly basis and which provides a structured forum for employer input and feedback.

Although including the Economic Development Corporation as a key partner has clearly enhanced the Center's legitimacy and credibility with area employers, local actors believe that a "multi-directional approach" is crucial to overcoming what is perceived as "the employer perception of the welfare stereotype." One-Stop actors have seized upon various opportunities to broaden the image of the Center, including sponsoring employer seminars on topics of significant interest (e.g., the current labor shortage and workforce diversity). Additional efforts include acting as a liaison between area businesses and schools, facilitating the recruitment of individuals interested in apprenticeships and similar arrangements, conducting employer needs analyses and developing training around those needs and, in general, cultivating an "identity" for the Center within the business community.

Local One-Stop actors believe that employer services offer many opportunities for the Center, and services continue to evolve. Key partners involved in the delivery of services to employers include Job Service and the Technical College's Center for Business and Industry. At present, the WDC offers:

- *A range of recruitment services*, currently the most popular service with employers. Recruitment services available to employers include job order services, applicant referrals, assessment of job applicants, participation in job fairs, participation in internship programs, and access to national job listings. Currently, employers can "list" job orders by using the Job Service's on-line, labor exchange system (*JobNet*) and/or using the Technical College's system, also on site. Employers are encouraged to use both. Although seemingly duplicative, partner agencies realized that employers may have had negative past experiences with the Job Service and/or positive experiences with the Technical College, and wanted to offer employers a choice. Moreover, employers that are seeking graduates with specific credentials may use the system offered by the Technical College for this reason as well.
- *Technical assistance and a variety of employer-oriented workforce development services*, including business relocation/expansion assistance, outplacement services, business needs analysis, labor market information, information about linkages with school districts, tours and presentations, and coordination of youth apprenticeships.
- *Workforce training services*, including customized training, on- or off-site workshops, seminars and skills upgrading.

Through the Economic Development Corporation, the Center also offers various forms of financial support to local businesses, including assistance obtaining economic development financing and business loans.

Many of the Center's business services are fee-based, most notably customized training and consulting services. In fact, customized training on TQM is currently one of the most popular services. Local actors are eager to further explore fee-for-services arrangements. Several employer focus groups have been conducted to assess employer needs and willingness to pay for specific services. Feedback indicates that area employers are especially interested in paying for the screening of prospective employees.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Individuals

In addition to brief and informal conversations with Center users during the evaluation site visit, a focus group was held with individuals currently participating in activities and services at the Workforce Development Center. Focus group participants varied in terms of demographic characteristics, program eligibility, as well as the services that they were receiving. Customer response to the Center and its services was overwhelmingly positive. It was believed that the difference between the WDC and "traditional" services was quite pronounced, like "night and day."

Focus group participants recounted past experiences working with different agencies in different environments. The Workforce Development Center was a clearly different paradigm. It was mentioned that even the layout and the professionalism of the environment was "full of hope instead of despair." One young woman recounted her experiences with traditional "human services agencies," stating that "...you walked in and you were a criminal and you were a jerk. Here they treat you with respect....The receptionist doesn't care why you're here. They're there to help you." Similarly, a middle-aged man who was an airplane pilot teaching individuals to fly was using the Center to find a part-time job because business was slow in the winter. He reiterated the theme that "the old systems aren't working," mentioning that he had familiarity with "other government offices like Social Security offices and welfare offices." "This is different. The people are professional. It's a positive environment. I'm very impressed."

The access to multiple resources was viewed as especially important. For instance, one woman in her mid-20's with four children originally came to the Center to apply for AFDC. She stated that "Every*one* and every*thing* was out here. You can get in touch with all these agencies, and it worked out real well for me." This individual is currently completing a non-traditional training program in plumbing and is also attending an on-site job-seeking workshop. Many participants also stated that they liked the self-directedness of the Center and the ability to use various equipment at their own convenience. This was the case for one focus group participant who was a veteran about to lose his long-held job at a major area employer. He came to the Center looking for job information and was introduced to the on-line *JobNet* labor exchange information system. Although uncomfortable at first with the technology, he currently feels proficient and at ease. The major benefits to him include the fact that no "intermediary" is necessary, although he felt more comfortable knowing that staff would be available to assist, stating that "They bend over backwards for you and give you excellent information." The fact that the Center offered evening and weekend hours was also perceived as important.

Although self-directed activities and services were clearly viewed as important, it was also believed that there was no substitute for face-to-face interaction. Human contact was wanted and needed, especially by a few of the participants who unequivocally stated that their case manager was "key" for them. The experience of one participant is a case in point. In his late 30's, this man was an ex-offender who came to the WDC to apply for General Assistance. He recounted "horror" stories of working with another non-partner agency for almost a year, following "dead-end job leads" and being required to participate in months of testing that was perceived as repetitive and a waste of time. He didn't expect the support and assistance he received at the WDC. It was clear to him that his WDC case manager was a strong advocate, even driving him to meetings with his parole officer and encouraging him to make use of his degree in business and explore job leads via the *JobNet*. In another case, a young woman credited her case manager as helping her achieve her GED, "see past the obstacles" and receive computer and office skills training. She had a job interview scheduled the following day and stated, "I don't know what I would have done without her guidance."

Employers

Employer feedback regarding WDC services and activities was garnered through both an individual meeting, as well as through the perusal of a videotaped employer focus group that was conducted the week prior to the on-site visit. The response to the Center, as well as its services, was very positive. The WDC was considered to be a professional environment offering professional services, which was clearly a departure from what employers were accustomed to based either on past experience or stereotypical understandings.

In terms of specific services, respondents praised both the training programs sponsored by the WDC as well as recruitment services. One employer opined that "the nicest thing is the ordering. You can put in a job order and it goes everywhere. We've had great luck with getting people." In another case, a Human Resources Manager from a major national retailer stated that her company recently added a second shift and needed more than 100 employees within a short period of time. Although difficult, especially considering the current labor shortage, she said that when she approached Center staff and discussed her needs, "It was never a matter of 'I don't think we can do it.' It was 'Let's talk about *how* we can do it'."

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL DESIGN

Notwithstanding the key factors discussed early in this Profile—the local economy, the proposed reduction in the number of local planning units, and the expected changes associated with block grants—there are several local-level factors that have influenced local One-Stop design and implementation. The broad range of partner agencies involved in the WDC, for instance, has facilitated local efforts to create a more comprehensive workforce development service delivery system. In terms of specific partners, the inclusion of the Economic Development Corporation has influenced the Center's reputation within the business community, and the inclusion of Partners for Education helps maintain a focus on youth and educational issues. In addition, the involvement of all layers of partner agency staff in the development of the local design has been a dramatic influence on local implementation. The many opportunities to work together *before* the Center was operational were invaluable experiences in terms of building trust, rapport, and hashing out issues before the Center was opened.

State-level influences on local One-Stop design and implementation include an extended history of state efforts to encourage coordinated workforce development planning and service delivery across local agencies and programs. State attempts to influence local One-Stop efforts began several years ago with the requirement for the development of local plans called Core Coordination Documents. More recently, the state developed Job Center Standards and allocated One-Stop implementation grant funds to local areas to be used to further the achievement of these standards. Although proud that they are perceived as early pioneers of the state's Job Center initiative, WDC staff view the bureaucracy associated with statewide implementation of the Job Center model with some concern. Local staff perceive that, while their early experiences helped lead to the development of the state's Job Center Standards, the standards themselves may not be flexible enough to capture the uniqueness of each local One-Stop site. State-level design work and infrastructure investments have also shaped the local use of information technology products such as JobNet and Career Visions. Whatever form of the proposed welfare reform package passes the state legislature will also be an important influence on the services available through the WDC in the future.

ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

It is clear that the Waukesha County Workforce Development Center has made significant strides in creating a customer-oriented, comprehensive service delivery system. Meaningful collaborative relationships across numerous local partners have enabled local One-Stop actors to move forward toward the achievement of a common mission in which all partners can add value to the effort and "feed off of each other." The experience of the WDC may be somewhat unique, however, in that the Center is a new facility, jointly designed and managed by the partner agencies. It is likely that that entire experience had a catalyzing effect on agency partnerships. Key lessons learned include the tangible benefits resulting from the involvement of all levels of staff from a broad range of local partner agencies, in addition to the importance of continued cross-training and teambuilding efforts.